THREE
DIALOGUES
BETWEEN
HYLAS and PHILONOUS.
IN OPPOSITION TO
SCEPTICS and ATHEISTS.

BY GEORGE BERKLEY, M. A.
Since LORD BISHOP of CLOYNE.

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THE FIRST DIALOGUE.

PHILONOUS.

GOOD morrow, Hylas; I did not expect to find you abroad ſo early.

HYLAS. It is indeed ſomething unuſual; but my thoughts were ſo taken up with a ſubject I was diſcourſing of laſt night, that, finding I could not ſleep, I reſolved to riſe and take a turn in the garden.

PHIL. It happened well, to let you ſee what innocent and agreeable pleaſures you loſe every morning. Can there be a pleaſanter time of the day, or a more delightful ſeaſon of the year? That purple ſky; theſe wild, but ſweet, notes of birds; the fragrant bloom upon the trees and flowers; the gentle influence of the riſing ſun; — theſe, and a thouſand nameleſs beauties of nature, inſpire the ſoul with ſecret tranſports: its

faculties too, being at this time freſh and lively, are fit for thoſe meditations, which the ſolitude of a garden and tranquillity of the morning naturally diſpoſe us to. But I am afraid I interrupt your thoughts; for you ſeemed very intent on ſomething.

HYL. It is true, I was; and ſhall be obliged to you if you will permit me to go on in the ſame vein: not that I would by any means deprive myſelf of your company; for my thoughts always flow more eaſily in converſation with a friend than when I am alone: but my requeſt is, that you would ſuffer me to impart my reflexions to you.

PHIL. With all my heart; it is what I ſhould have requeſted myſelf, if you had not prevented me.

HYL. I was conſidering the odd fate of thoſe men who have, in all ages, through an affectation of being diſtinguiſhed from the vulgar, or ſome unaccountable turn of thought, pretended either to believe nothing at all, or to believe the moſt extravagant things in the world. This, however, might be borne, if their paradoxes and ſcepticiſm did not draw after them ſome conſequences of general diſadvantage to mankind: but the miſchief lies here; that when men of leſs leiſure ſee them, who are ſuppoſed to have ſpent their whole time in the purſuits of knowledge, profeſſing an entire ignorance of all things, or advancing ſuch notions as are repugnant to plain and

and commonly-received principles, they will be tempted to entertain ſuſpicions concerning the moſt important truths which they had hitherto held ſacred and unqueſtionable.

PHIL. I entirely agree with you, as to the ill tendency of the affected doubts of ſome philoſophers, and fantaſtical conceits of others. I am even ſo far gone, of late, in this way of thinking, that I have quitted ſeveral of the ſublime notions, I had got in their ſchools, for vulgar opinions; and I give it you on my word, ſince this revolt from metaphyſical notions to the plain dictates of nature and common-ſenſe, I find my underſtanding ſtrangely enlightened, ſo that I can now eaſily comprehend a great many things which before were all myſtery and riddle.

HYL. I am glad to find there was nothing in the accounts I heard of you.

PHIL. Pray, what were thoſe?

HYL. You were repreſented, in laſt night's converſation, as one who maintained the moſt extravagant opinion that ever entered into the mind of man; *viz.* That there is no ſuch thing as *material ſubſtance* in the world.

PHIL. That there is no ſuch thing as what philoſophers call *material ſubſtance*, I am ſeriouſly perſuaded: but, if I were made to ſee any thing abſurd or ſceptical in this, I ſhould then have the ſame reaſon to renounce this, that I imagine I have now to reject the contrary opinion.

HYL. What! can any thing be more fantaſtical, more repugnant to common-ſenſe, or a more manifeſt piece of ſcepticiſm, than to believe there is no ſuch thing as *matter?*

PHIL. Softly, good Hylas. What if it ſhould prove, that you, who hold there is, are, by virtue of that opinion, a greater *ſceptic*, and maintain more paradoxes and repugnancies to common-ſenſe, than I who believe no ſuch thing?

HYL. You may as ſoon perſuade me, the part is greater than the whole, as that, in order to avoid abſurdity and ſcepticiſm, I ſhould ever be obliged to give up my opinion in this point.

PHIL. Well, then, are you content to admit that opinion for true, which, upon examination, ſhall appear moſt agreeable to common-ſenſe, and remote from ſcepticiſm?

HYL. With all my heart. Since you are for raiſing diſputes about the plaineſt things in nature, I am content, for once, to hear what you have to ſay.

PHIL. Pray, Hylas, what do you mean by a *ſceptic?*

HYL. I mean what all men mean, one that doubts of every thing.

PHIL. He, then, who entertains no doubt concerning ſome particular point, with regard to that point cannot be thought a *ſceptic.*

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL.

PHIL. Whether does doubting conſiſt in embracing the affirmative or negative ſide of a queſtion?

HYL. In neither: for whoever underſtands Engliſh cannot but know that *doubting* ſignifies a ſuſpenſe between both.

PHIL. He, then, that denies any point, can no more be ſaid to doubt of it, than he who affirms it with the ſame degree of aſſurance.

HYL. True.

PHIL. And conſequently, for ſuch his denial, is no more to be eſteemed a *ſceptic* than the other.

HYL. I acknowledge it.

PHIL. How comes it then, Hylas, that you pronounce me a *ſceptic*, becauſe I deny what you affirm, *viz.* the exiſtence of matter? ſince, for ought you can tell, I am as peremptory in my denial, as you in your affirmation.

HYL. Hold, Philonous: I have been a little out in my definition; but every falſe ſtep a man makes in diſcourſe is not to be inſiſted on. I ſaid, indeed, that a *ſceptic* was one who doubted of every thing; but I ſhould have added, "or who "denies the reality and truth of things."

PHIL. What things? Do you mean the principles and theorems of ſciences? But theſe, you know, are univerſal intellectual notions, and conſequently independent of matter: the denial, therefore, of this doth not imply the denying them.

HYL. I grant it. But are there no other things? What think you of diſtruſting the ſenſes? of denying the real exiſtence of ſenſible things? or pretending to know nothing of them? Is not this ſufficient to denominate a man a *ſceptic?*

PHIL. Shall we, therefore, examine which of us it is that denies the reality of ſenſible things, or profeſſes the greateſt ignorance of them? ſince, if I take you rightly, he is to be eſteemed the greateſt *ſceptic.*

HYL. That is what I deſire.

PHIL. What mean you by ſenſible things?

HYL. Thoſe things which are perceived by the ſenſes. Can you imagine that I mean any thing elſe?

PHIL. Pardon me, Hylas, if I am deſirous clearly to apprehend your notions; ſince this may much ſhorten our inquiry. Suffer me, then, to aſk you this farther queſtion: — Are thoſe things only perceived by the ſenſes which are perceived immediately? or may thoſe things properly be ſaid to be *ſenſible*, which are perceived mediately, or not without the intervention of others?

HYL. I do not ſufficiently underſtand you.

PHIL. In reading a book, what I immediately perceive are the letters; but mediately, or by means of theſe, are ſuggeſted to my thoughts the notions of God, virtue, truth, *&c.* Now, that the letters are truly ſenſible things, or perceived by ſenſe, there is no doubt: but I would know whether

whether you take the things ſuggeſted by them to be ſo too.

HYL. No, certainly: it were abſurd to think *God* or *virtue* ſenſible things, though they may be ſignified and ſuggeſted to the mind by ſenſible marks, with which they have an arbitrary connexion.

PHIL. It ſeems, then, that, by *ſenſible things*, you mean thoſe only which can be perceived immediately by ſenſe.

HYL. Right.

PHIL. Does it not follow, from this, that, though I ſee one part of the ſky red, and another blue, and that my reaſon doth thence evidently conclude there muſt be ſome cauſe of that diverſity of colours, yet that cauſe cannot be ſaid to be a ſenſible thing, or perceived by the ſenſe of ſeeing?

HYL. It does.

PHIL. In like manner, though I hear variety of ſounds, yet I cannot be ſaid to hear the cauſes of thoſe ſounds.

HYL. You cannot.

PHIL. And when, by my touch, I perceive a thing to be hot and heavy, I cannot ſay, with any truth or propriety, that I feel the cauſe of its heat or weight.

HYL. To prevent any more queſtions of this kind, I tell you, once for all, that, by *ſenſible things*, I mean thoſe only which are perceived by

ſenſe; and that in truth the ſenſes perceive nothing which they do not perceive immediately; for they make no inferences. The deducing, therefore, of cauſes, or occaſions, from effects and appearances, which alone are perceived by ſenſe, entirely relates to reaſon.

PHIL. This point, then, is agreed between us, That *ſenſible things are thoſe only which are immediately perceived by ſenſe.* You will farther inform me, whether we immediately perceive, by ſight, any thing beſide light, and colours, and figures; or, by hearing, any thing but ſounds; by the palate, any thing beſide taſtes; by the ſmell, beſide odours; or, by the touch, more than tangible qualities.

HYL. We do not.

PHIL. It ſeems, therefore, that, if you take away all ſenſible qualities, there remains nothing ſenſible.

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. Senſible things, therefore, are nothing elſe but ſo many ſenſible qualities, or combinations of ſenſible qualities.

HYL. Nothing elſe.

PHIL. Heat, then, is a ſenſible thing.

HYL. Certainly.

PHIL. Does the reality of ſenſible things conſiſt in being perceived? or is it ſomething diſtinct from their being perceived, and that bears no relation to the mind?

HYL.

HYL. To *exiſt* is one thing, and to be *perceived* is another.

PHIL. I ſpeak with regard to ſenſible things only: and of theſe I aſk, Whether, by their real exiſtence, you mean a ſubſiſtence exterior to the mind, and diſtinct from their being perceived?

HYL. I mean a real, abſolute, being, diſtinct from, and without any relation to, their being perceived.

PHIL. Heat, therefore, if it be allowed a real being, muſt exiſt without the mind.

HYL. It muſt.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, is this real exiſtence equally compatible to all degrees of heat which we perceive? or is there any reaſon why we ſhould attribute it to ſome, and deny it to others? And, if there be, pray let me know that reaſon.

HYL. Whatever degree of heat we perceive by ſenſe, we may be ſure, the ſame exiſts in the object that occaſions it.

PHIL. What, the greateſt as well as the leaſt?

HYL. I tell you, the reaſon is plainly the ſame in reſpect of both: they are both perceived by ſenſe: nay, the greater degree of heat is more ſenſibly perceived; and, conſequently, if there is any difference, we are more certain of its real exiſtence than we can be of the reality of a leſſer degree.

PHIL. But is not the moſt vehement and intenſe degree of heat a very great pain?

HYL.

HYL. No one can deny it.

PHIL. And is any unperceiving thing capable of pain or pleaſure ?

HYL. No, certainly.

PHIL. Is your material ſubſtance a ſenſeleſs being, or a being endowed with ſenſe and perception ?

HYL. It is ſenſeleſs, without doubt.

PHIL. It cannot, therefore, be the ſubject of pain.

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. Nor, conſequently, of the greateſt heat perceived by ſenſe, ſince you acknowledge this to be no ſmall pain.

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. What ſhall we ſay, then, of your external object ? is it a material ſubſtance, or not ?

HYL. It is a material ſubſtance, with the ſenſible qualities inhering in it.

PHIL. How, then, can a great heat exiſt in it, ſince you own it cannot in a material ſubſtance ? I deſire you would clear this point.

HYL. Hold, Philonous : I fear I was out in yielding intenſe heat to be a pain. It ſhould ſeem rather that pain is ſomething diſtinct from heat, and the conſequence or effect of it.

PHIL. Upon putting your hand near the fire, do you perceive one ſimple, uniform, ſenſation, or two diſtinct ſenſations ?

HYL. But one ſimple ſenſation.

PHIL.

PHIL. Is not the heat immediately perceived?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And the pain?

HYL. True.

PHIL. Seeing, therefore, they are both immediately perceived at the ſame time, and the fire affects you only with one ſimple or uncompounded idea, it follows, that this ſame ſimple idea is both the intenſe heat immediately perceived, and the pain; and, conſequently, that the intenſe heat immediately perceived is nothing diſtinct from a particular ſort of pain.

HYL. It ſeems ſo.

PHIL. Again; try, in your thoughts, Hylas, if you can conceive a vehement ſenſation to be without pain or pleaſure.

HYL. I cannot.

PHIL. Or can you frame to yourſelf an idea of ſenſible pain or pleaſure in general, abſtracted from every particular idea of heat, cold, taſtes, ſmells? *&c.*

HYL. I do not find that I can.

PHIL. Does it not, therefore, follow, that ſenſible pain is nothing diſtinct from thoſe ſenſations, or ideas, in an intenſe degree?

HYL. It is undeniable; and, to ſpeak the truth, I begin to ſuſpect a very great heat cannot exiſt but in a mind perceiving it.

PHIL. What! are you, then, in that *ſceptical* ſtate of ſuſpenſe, between affirming and denying?

HYL,

HYL. I think I may be poſitive in the point. A very violent and painful heat cannot exiſt without the mind.

PHIL. It has not, therefore, according to you, any real being.

HYL. I own it.

PHIL. Is it, therefore, certain that there is no body in nature really hot?

HYL. I have not denied there is any real heat in bodies: I only ſay, there is no ſuch thing as an intenſe real heat.

PHIL. But did you not ſay, before, that all degrees of heat were equally real; or, if there were any difference, that the greater were more undoubtedly real than the leſſer?

HYL. True: but it was becauſe I did not then conſider the ground there is for diſtinguiſhing between them, which I now plainly ſee; and it is this: becauſe intenſe heat is nothing elſe but a particular kind of painful ſenſation; and pain cannot exiſt but in a perceiving being; it follows, that no intenſe heat can really exiſt in an unperceiving corporeal ſubſtance. But this is no reaſon why we ſhould deny heat, in an inferior degree, to exiſt in ſuch a ſubſtance.

PHIL. But how ſhall we be able to diſcern thoſe degrees of heat which exiſt only in the mind, from thoſe which exiſt without it?

HYL. That is no difficult matter. You know the leaſt pain cannot exiſt unperceived; whatever,

ever, therefore, degree of heat is a pain, exiſts only in the mind: but, as for all other degrees of heat, nothing obliges us to think the ſame of them.

PHIL. I think you granted, before, that no unperceiving being was capable of pleaſure, any more than of pain.

HYL. I did.

PHIL. And is not warmth, or a more gentle degree of heat than what cauſes uneaſineſs, a pleaſure?

HYL. What then?

PHIL. Conſequently it cannot exiſt without the mind, in any unperceiving ſubſtance or body.

HYL. So it ſeems.

PHIL. Since, therefore, as well thoſe degrees of heat that are not painful, as thoſe that are, can exiſt only in a thinking ſubſtance, may we not conclude, that external bodies are abſolutely incapable of any degree of heat whatſoever?

HYL. On ſecond thoughts, I do not think it ſo evident that warmth is a pleaſure, as that a great degree of heat is a pain.

PHIL. I do not pretend that warmth is as great a pleaſure as heat is a pain: but, if you grant it to be even a ſmall pleaſure, it ſerves to make good my concluſion.

HYL. I could rather call it an *indolence*. It ſeems to be nothing more than a privation of both pain and pleaſure: and that ſuch a quality

or

or ſtate as this may agree to an unthinking ſubſtance, I hope you will not deny.

PHIL. If you are reſolved to maintain, that warmth, or a gentle degree of heat, is no pleaſure, I know not how to convince you otherwiſe, than by appealing to your own ſenſe. But what think you of cold?

HYL. The ſame that I do of heat. An intenſe degree of cold is a pain; for, to feel a very great cold, is to perceive a great uneaſineſs: it cannot, therefore, exiſt without the mind; but a leſſer degree of cold may, as well as a leſſer degree of heat.

PHIL. Thoſe bodies, therefore, upon whoſe application to our own we perceive a moderate degree of heat, muſt be concluded to have a moderate degree of heat or warmth in them; and thoſe, upon whoſe application we feel a like degree of cold, muſt be thought to have cold in them.

HYL. They muſt.

PHIL. Can any doctrine be true that neceſſarily leads a man into an abſurdity?

HYL. Without doubt, it cannot.

PHIL. Is it not an abſurdity to think that the ſame thing ſhould be at the ſame time both cold and warm?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Suppoſe, now, one of your hands hot, and the other cold; and that they are both at once

once put into the ſame veſſel of water, in an intermediate ſtate; will not the water ſeem cold to one hand, and warm to the other?

HYL. It will.

PHIL. Ought we not, therefore, by your principles, to conclude it is really both cold and warm at the ſame time; that is, according to your own conceſſion, to believe an abſurdity?

HYL. I confeſs, it ſeems ſo.

PHIL. Conſequently the principles themſelves are falſe; ſince you have granted that no true principle leads to an abſurdity.

HYL. But, after all, can any thing be more abſurd than to ſay, *there is no heat in the fire?*

PHIL. To make the point ſtill clearer; tell me, whether, in two caſes exactly alike, we ought not to make the ſame judgement?

HYL. We ought.

PHIL. When a pin pricks your finger, does it not rend and divide the fibres of your fleſh?

HYL. It does.

PHIL. And when a coal burns your finger, does it any more?

HYL. It does not.

PHIL. Since, therefore, you neither judge the ſenſation itſelf occaſioned by the pin, nor any thing like it, to be in the pin; you ſhould not, conformably to what you have now granted, judge the ſenſation, occaſioned by the fire, or any thing like it, to be in the fire.

HYL. Well, ſince it muſt be ſo, I am content to yield this point, and acknowledge, that heat and cold are only ſenſations exiſting in our minds: but there ſtill remain qualities enough to ſecure the reality of external things.

PHIL. But what will you ſay, Hylas, if it ſhall appear that the caſe is the ſame with regard to all other ſenſible qualities, and that they can no more be ſuppoſed to exiſt without the mind, than heat and cold?

HYL. Then, indeed, you will have done ſomething to the purpoſe: but that is what I deſpair of ſeeing proved.

PHIL. Let us examine them in order. What think you of taſtes? do they exiſt without the mind, or not?

HYL. Can any man in his ſenſes doubt whether ſugar is ſweet, or wormwood bitter?

PHIL. Inform me, Hylas: is a ſweet taſte a particular kind of pleaſure or pleaſant ſenſation, or is it not?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And is not bitterneſs ſome kind of uneaſineſs or pain?

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. If, therefore, ſugar and wormwood are unthinking corporeal ſubſtances exiſting without the mind, how can ſweetneſs and bitterneſs, that is, pleaſure and pain, agree to them?

HYL.

Hyl. Hold, Philonous: I now ſee what it was deluded me all this time. You aſked whether heat and cold, ſweetneſs and bitterneſs, were not particular ſorts of pleaſure and pain: to which I anſwered ſimply, that they were: whereas I ſhould have thus diſtinguiſhed: Thoſe qualities, as perceived by us, are pleaſures or pains; but not as exiſting in the external objects: we muſt not, therefore, conclude abſolutely that there is no heat in the fire, or ſweetneſs in the ſugar; but only that heat or ſweetneſs, as perceived by us, is not in the fire or ſugar. What ſay you to this?

Phil. I ſay, it is nothing to the purpoſe. Our diſcourſe proceeded altogether concerning ſenſible things; which you defined to be the things we *immediately perceive by our ſenſes.* Whatever other qualities, therefore, you ſpeak of, as diſtinct from theſe, I know nothing of them; neither do they at all belong to the point in diſpute. You may, indeed, pretend to have diſcovered certain qualities which you do not perceive, and aſſert thoſe inſenſible qualities exiſt in fire and ſugar: but what uſe can be made of this to your preſent purpoſe, I am at a loſs to conceive. Tell me, then, once more, do you acknowledge that heat and cold, ſweetneſs and bitterneſs, (meaning thoſe qualities which are perceived by the ſenſes,) do not exiſt without the mind?

Hyl. I ſee it is to no purpoſe to hold out, ſo I give up the cauſe as to thoſe mentioned qualities;

though I profeſs it ſounds oddly, to ſay that ſugar is not ſweet.

PHIL. But, for your farther ſatisfaction, take this along with you: That, which at other times ſeems ſweet, ſhall, to a diſtempered palate, appear bitter. And nothing can be plainer than that divers perſons perceive different taſtes in the ſame food; ſince that, which one man delights in, another abhors. And how could this be, if the taſte were ſomething really inherent in the food?

HYL. I acknowledge I know not how.

PHIL. In the next place, odours are to be conſidered. And, with regard to theſe, I would fain know whether what has been ſaid of taſtes does not exactly agree to them: are they not ſo many pleaſing or diſpleaſing ſenſations?

HYL. They are.

PHIL. Can you, then, conceive it poſſible that they ſhould exiſt in an unperceiving thing?

HYL. I cannot.

PHIL. Or can you imagine, that filth and ordure affect thoſe brute animals, that feed on them out of choice, with the ſame ſmells which we perceive in them?

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. May we not, therefore, conclude of ſmells, as of the other forementioned qualities, that they cannot exiſt in any but a perceiving ſubſtance or mind?

HYL.

HYL. I think ſo.

PHIL. Then, as to ſounds, what muſt we think of them? are they accidents really inherent in external bodies, or not?

HYL. That they inhere not in the ſonorous bodies, is plain from hence; becauſe a bell, ſtruck in the exhauſted receiver of an air-pump, ſends forth no ſound. The air, therefore, muſt be thought the ſubject of ſound.

PHIL. What reaſon is there for that, Hylas?

HYL. Becauſe, when any motion is raiſed in the air, we perceive a ſound, greater or leſſer, in proportion to the air's motion; but, without ſome motion in the air, we never hear any ſound at all.

PHIL. And, granting that we never hear a ſound but when ſome motion is produced in the air, yet I do not ſee how you can infer, from thence, that the ſound itſelf is in the air.

HYL. It is this very motion, in the external air, that produces in the mind the ſenſation of *ſound*: for, ſtriking on the drum of the air, it cauſes a vibration, which by the auditory nerves being communicated to the brain, the ſoul is thereupon affected with the ſenſation called *ſound*.

PHIL. What! is ſound, then, a ſenſation?

HYL. I tell you, as perceived by us, it is a particular ſenſation in the mind.

PHIL. And can any ſenſation exiſt without the mind?

HYL. No, certainly.

PHIL. How, then, can ſound, being a ſenſation, exiſt in the air, if, by the *air*, you mean a ſenſeleſs ſubſtance, exiſting without the mind?

HYL. You muſt diſtinguiſh, Philonous, between ſound as it is perceived by us, and as it is in itſelf; or (which is the ſame thing) between the ſound we immediately perceive, and that which exiſts without us. The former, indeed, is a particular kind of ſenſation; but the latter is merely a vibrative or undulatory motion in the air.

PHIL. I thought I had already obviated that diſtinction, by the anſwer I gave when you were applying it in a like caſe before: but, to ſay no more of that; are you ſure, then, that ſound is really nothing but motion?

HYL. I am.

PHIL. Whatever, therefore, agrees to real ſound, may with truth be attributed to motion.

HYL. It may.

PHIL. It is, then, good ſenſe to ſpeak of *motion* as of a thing that is *loud*, *ſweet*, *acute*, *grave*, &c.

HYL. I ſee you are reſolved not to underſtand me. Is it not evident, thoſe accidents or modes belong only to ſenſible ſound, or *ſound* in the common acceptation of the word, but not to *ſound* in the real and philoſophic ſenſe, which, as I juſt now told you, is nothing but a certain motion of the air?

PHIL. It ſeems, then, there are two ſorts of ſound;

ſound; the one vulgar, or that which is heard; the other philoſophical and real.

HYL. Even ſo.

PHIL. And the latter conſiſts in motion.

HYL. I told you ſo before.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, to which of the ſenſes, think you, the idea of motion belongs? to the hearing?

HYL. No, certainly; but to the ſight and touch.

PHIL. It ſhould follow, then, that, according to you, real ſounds may poſſibly be *ſeen* or *felt*, but never *heard*.

HYL. Look you, Philonous; you may, if you pleaſe, make a jeſt of my opinion; but that will not alter the truth of things. I own, indeed, the inferences you draw me into ſound ſomething oddly; but common language, you know, is framed by, and for the uſe of, the vulgar: we muſt not, therefore, wonder, if expreſſions, adapted to exact philoſophic notions, ſeem uncouth and out of the way.

PHIL. Is it come to that? I aſſure you I imagine myſelf to have gained no ſmall point, ſince you make ſo light of departing from common phraſes and opinions; it being a main part of our inquiry to examine whoſe notions are wideſt of the common road, and moſt repugnant to the general ſenſe of the world. But can you think it no more than a philoſophical paradox, to ſay that *real*

ſounds are never heard, and that the idea of them is obtained by ſome other ſenſe? and is there nothing, in this, contrary to nature and the truth of things?

HYL. To deal ingenuouſly, I do not like it; and, after the conceſſions already made, I had as good grant that ſounds too have no real being without the mind.

PHIL. And I hope you will make no difficulty to acknowledge the ſame of colours.

HYL. Pardon me: the caſe of colours is very different. Can any thing be plainer than that we ſee them on the objects?

PHIL. The objects you ſpeak of are, I ſuppoſe, corporeal ſubſtances exiſting without the mind.

HYL. They are.

PHIL. And have true and real colours inhering in them?

HYL. Each viſible object has that colour which we ſee in it.

PHIL. How! is there any thing viſible but what we perceive by ſight?

HYL. There is not.

PHIL. And do we perceive any thing, by ſenſe, which we do not perceive immediately?

HYL. How often muſt I be obliged to repeat the ſame thing? I tell you, we do not.

PHIL. Have patience, good Hylas; and tell me, once more, whether there is any thing immediately perceived by the ſenſes, except ſenſible qualities.

qualities. I know you aſſerted there was not: but I would now be informed whether you ſtill perſiſt in the ſame opinion.

HYL. I do.

PHIL. Pray, is your corporeal ſubſtance either a ſenſible quality, or made up of ſenſible qualities?

HYL. What a queſtion that is! Who ever thought it was?

PHIL. My reaſon for aſking was, becauſe, in ſaying, *each viſible object has that colour which we ſee in it*, you make viſible objects to be corporeal ſubſtances; which implies either that corporeal ſubſtances are ſenſible qualities, or elſe that there is ſomething beſide ſenſible qualities perceived by ſight: but, as this point was formerly agreed between us, and is ſtill maintained by you, it is a clear conſequence that your corporeal ſubſtance is nothing diſtinct from ſenſible qualities.

HYL. You may draw as many abſurd conſequences as you pleaſe, and endeavour to perplex the plaineſt things; but you ſhall never perſuade me out of my ſenſes. I clearly underſtand my own meaning.

PHIL. I wiſh you would make me underſtand it too. But, ſince you are unwilling to have your notion of corporeal ſubſtance examined, I ſhall urge that point no farther. Only be pleaſed to let me know, whether the ſame colours, which we ſee, exiſt in external bodies, or ſome other.

HYL. The very ſame.

PHIL. What! are, then, the beautiful red and purple, we ſee on yonder clouds, really in them? or do you imagine they have in themſelves any other form than that of a dark miſt or vapour?

HYL. I muſt own, Philonous, thoſe colours are not really in the clouds, as they ſeem to be at this diſtance: they are only apparent colours.

PHIL. *Apparent*, call you them? how ſhall we diſtinguiſh theſe apparent colours from real?

HYL. Very eaſily. Thoſe are to be thought apparent, which, appearing only at a diſtance, vaniſh upon a nearer approach.

PHIL. And thoſe, I ſuppoſe, are to be thought real, which are diſcovered by the moſt near and exact ſurvey.

HYL. Right.

PHIL. Is the neareſt and exacteſt ſurvey made by help of a microſcope, or by the naked eye?

HYL. By a microſcope, doubtleſs.

PHIL. But a microſcope often diſcovers colours in an object different from thoſe perceived by the unaſſiſted ſight; and, in caſe we had microſcopes magnifying to any aſſigned degree, it is certain that no object whatſoever, viewed through them, would appear in the ſame colour which it exhibits to the naked eye.

HYL. And what will you conclude from all this? You cannot argue that there are really and naturally no colours on objects, becauſe, by artificial

tificial managements, they may be altered or made to vaniſh.

PHIL. I think it may evidently be concluded, from your own conceſſions, that all the colours we ſee with our naked eyes are only apparent, as thoſe on the clouds, ſince they vaniſh upon a more cloſe and accurate inſpection, which is afforded us by a microſcope. Then, as to what you ſay by way of prevention, I aſk you, whether the real and natural ſtate of an object is better diſcovered by a very ſharp and piercing ſight, or by one which is leſs ſharp?

HYL. By the former, without doubt.

PHIL. Is it not plain, from *dioptrics*, that microſcopes make the ſight more penetrating, and repreſent objects as they would appear to the eye in caſe it were naturally endowed with a moſt exquiſite ſharpneſs?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Conſequently the microſcopical repreſentation is to be thought that which beſt ſets forth the real nature of the thing, or what it is in itſelf. The colours, therefore, by it perceived, are more genuine and real than thoſe perceived otherwiſe.

HYL. I confeſs there is ſomething in what you ſay.

PHIL. Beſides, it is not only poſſible, but manifeſt, that there actually are animals whoſe eyes are by nature framed to perceive thoſe things, which,

which, by reaſon of their minuteneſs, eſcape our ſight. What think you of thoſe inconceivably-ſmall animals, perceived by glaſſes? Muſt we ſuppoſe they are all ſtark blind? or, in caſe they ſee, can it be imagined their ſight has not the ſame uſe, in preſerving their bodies from injuries, which appears in that of all other animals? and, if it hath, is it not evident they muſt ſee particles leſs than their own bodies, which will preſent them with a far different view, in each object, from that which ſtrikes our ſenſes? Even our own eyes do not always repreſent objects to us after the ſame manner. In the *jaundice*, every one knows that all things ſeem yellow. Is it not, therefore, highly probable, thoſe animals, in whoſe eyes we diſcern a very different texture from that of ours, and whoſe bodies abound with different humours, do not ſee the ſame colours, in every object, that we do? From all which, ſhould it not ſeem to follow, that all colours are equally apparent, and that none of thoſe which we perceive are really inherent in any outward object?

HYL. It ſhould.

PHIL. The point will be paſt all doubt, if you conſider, that, in caſe colours were real properties or affections inherent in external bodies, they could admit of no alteration, without ſome change wrought in the very bodies themſelves: but is it not evident, from what has been ſaid, that, upon the

the uſe of microſcopes, upon a change happening in the humours of the eye, or a variation of diſtance, without any manner of real alteration in the thing itſelf, the colours of any object are either changed, or totally diſappear? Nay, all other circumſtances remaining the ſame, change but the ſituation of ſome objects, and they ſhall preſent different colours to the eye. The ſame thing happens upon viewing an object in various degrees of light. And what is more known than that the ſame bodies appear differently coloured, by candle-light, from what they do in the open day? Add, to theſe, the experiment of a priſm; which, ſeparating the heterogeneous rays of light, alters the colour of any object, and will cauſe the whiteſt to appear of a deep blue, or red, to the naked eye. And now tell me, whether you are ſtill of opinion that every body has its true real colour inhering in it; and, if you think it has, I would fain know, farther, from you, what certain diſtance and poſition of the object, what peculiar texture and formation of the eye, what degree or kind of light is neceſſary for aſcertaining that true colour, and diſtinguiſhing it from apparent ones.

Hyl. I own myſelf entirely ſatisfied that they are all equally apparent, and that there is no ſuch thing as colour really inhering in external bodies, but that it is altogether in the light: and what confirms me in this opinion is, that, in proportion

portion to the light, colours are ſtill more or leſs vivid; and, if there be no light, then are there no colours perceived. Beſides, allowing there are colours on external objects, yet how is it poſſible for us to perceive them? for no external body affects the mind, unleſs it act firſt on our organs of ſenſe. But the only action of bodies is motion; and motion cannot be communicated otherwiſe than by impulſe: a diſtant object, therefore, cannot act on the eye, nor, conſequently, make itſelf, or its properties, perceivable to the ſoul. Whence it plainly follows, that it is immediately ſome contiguous ſubſtance, which, operating on the eye, occaſions a perception of colours: and ſuch is light.

PHIL. How! is light, then, a ſubſtance?

HYL. I tell you, Philonous, external light is nothing but a thin fluid ſubſtance, whoſe minute particles, being agitated with a briſk motion, and in various manners reflected from the different ſurfaces of outward objects to the eyes, communicate different motions to the optic nerves; which, being propagated to the brain, cauſe therein various impreſſions: and theſe are attended with the ſenſations of red, blue, yellow, &c.

PHIL. It ſeems, then, the light does no more than ſhake the optic nerves.

HYL. Nothing elſe.

PHIL.

PHIL. And, conſequent to each particular motion of the nerves, the mind is affected with a ſenſation, which is ſome particular colour.

HYL. Right.

PHIL. And theſe ſenſations have no exiſtence without the mind.

HYL. They have not.

PHIL. How, then, do you affirm, that colours are in the light, ſince, by *light*, you underſtand a corporeal ſubſtance external to the mind?

HYL. Light and colours, as immediately perceived by us, I grant, cannot exiſt without the mind: but, in themſelves, they conſiſt entirely in the motions and configurations of certain inſenſible particles of matter.

PHIL. Colours, then, in the vulgar ſenſe, or taken for the immediate objects of ſight, cannot agree to any but a perceiving ſubſtance.

HYL. That is what I ſay.

PHIL. Well, then, ſince you give up the point as to thoſe ſenſible qualities, which are alone thought colours by all mankind beſide, you may hold what you pleaſe with regard to thoſe inviſible ones of the philoſophers. It is not my buſineſs to diſpute about them; only I would adviſe you to think, whether, conſidering the inquiry we are upon, it be prudent for you to affirm, *the red and blue, which we ſee, are not real colours; but certain unknown motions and figures, which no man ever did or can ſee, are truly ſo.* Are not theſe

ſhocking

ſhocking notions? and are not they ſubject to as many ridiculous inferences as thoſe you before renounced in the caſe of ſounds?

HYL. I frankly own, Philonous, that it is in vain to ſtand out any longer. Colours, ſounds, taſtes, (in a word, all thoſe termed *ſecondary qualities*,) have certainly no exiſtence without the mind. But, by this acknowledgement, I muſt not be ſuppoſed to derogate any thing from the reality of matter, or external objects, ſeeing it is no more than ſeveral philoſophers maintain, who nevertheleſs are the fartheſt imaginable from denying matter. For the clearer underſtanding of this, you muſt know, ſenſible qualities are, by philoſophers, divided into *primary* and *ſecondary*. The former are, extenſion, figure, ſolidity, gravity, motion, and reſt; and theſe, they hold, exiſt really in bodies. The latter are thoſe above enumerated; or, briefly, all ſenſible qualities beſide the primary, which they aſſert are only ſo many ſenſations, or ideas, exiſting no where but in the mind. But all this, I doubt not, you are already apprized of. For my part, I have been a long time ſenſible there was ſuch an opinion current amongſt philoſophers, but was never thoroughly convinced of its truth till now.

PHIL. You are ſtill, then, of opinion, that extenſion and figure are inherent in external unthinking ſubſtances?

HYL. I am.

PHIL.

PHIL. But, what if the ſame arguments, which are brought againſt ſecondary qualities, will hold good againſt theſe alſo?

HYL. Why, then, I ſhall be obliged to think they too exiſt only in the mind.

PHIL. Is it your opinion, the very figure and extenſion, which you perceive by ſenſe, exiſt in the outward object or material ſubſtance?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Have all other animals as good grounds to think the ſame of the figure and extenſion which they ſee and feel?

HYL. Without doubt, if they have any thought at all.

PHIL. Anſwer me, Hylas: think you the ſenſes were beſtowed upon all animals for their preſervation and well-being in life? or were they given to men alone for this end?

HYL. I make no queſtion but they have the ſame uſe in all other animals.

PHIL. If ſo, is it not neceſſary they ſhould be enabled by them to perceive their own limbs and thoſe bodies which are capable of harming them?

HYL. Certainly.

PHIL. A mite, therefore, muſt be ſuppoſed to ſee his own foot, and things equal, or even leſs than it, as bodies of ſome conſiderable dimenſion; though at the ſame time they appear to you ſcarce diſcernible, or, at beſt, as ſo many viſible points.

HYL. I cannot deny it.

PHIL.

PHIL. And, to creatures leſs than the mite, they will ſeem yet larger.

HYL. They will.

PHIL. Inſomuch that what you can hardly diſcern, will, to another extremely minute animal, appear as ſome huge mountain.

HYL. All this I grant.

PHIL. Can one and the ſame thing be at the ſame time, in itſelf, of different dimenſions?

HYL. That were abſurd to imagine.

PHIL. But, from what you have laid down, it follows, that both the extenſion by you perceived, and that perceived by the mite itſelf, as likewiſe all thoſe perceived by leſſer animals, are each of them the true extenſion of the mite's foot; that is to ſay, by your own principles, you are led into an abſurdity.

HYL. There ſeems to be ſome difficulty in the point.

PHIL. Again, have you not acknowledged, that no real inherent property of any object can be changed, without ſome change in the thing itſelf?

HYL. I have.

PHIL. But, as we approach to, or recede from, an object, the viſible extenſion varies, being, at one diſtance, ten or a hundred times greater than at another. Does it not therefore follow from hence, likewiſe, that it is not really inherent in the object?

HYL. I own I am at a loſs what to think.

PHIL.

PHIL. Your judgement will ſoon be determined, if you will venture to think as freely, concerning this quality, as you have done concerning the reſt. Was it not admitted, as a good argument, that neither heat nor cold was in the water, becauſe it ſeemed warm to one hand, and cold to the other ?

HYL. It was.

PHIL. Is it not the very ſame reaſoning, to conclude there is no extenſion or figure in an object, becauſe, to one eye, it ſhall ſeem little, ſmooth, and round, when at the ſame time it appears, to the other, great, uneven, and angular ?

HYL. The very ſame. But doth this latter fact ever happen ?

PHIL. You may at any time make the experiment, by looking with one eye bare, and with the other through a microſcope.

HYL. I know not how to maintain it, and yet I am loath to give up *extenſion*, I ſee ſo many odd conſequences following upon ſuch a conceſſion.

PHIL. Odd, ſay you ? After the conceſſions already made, I hope you will ſtick at nothing for its oddneſs. But, on the other hand, ſhould it not ſeem very odd, if the general reaſoning, which includes all other ſenſible qualities, did not alſo include extenſion ? If it be allowed that no idea, nor any thing like an idea, can exiſt in an unperceiving ſubſtance, then ſurely it follows, that no figure or mode of extenſion, which we

can either perceive or imagine, or have any idea of, can be really inherent in matter; not to mention the peculiar difficulty there muſt be in conceiving a material ſubſtance, prior to, and diſtinct from, extenſion, to be the *ſubſtratum* of extenſion. Be the ſenſible quality what it will, figure, or ſound, or colour, it ſeems alike impoſſible it ſhould ſubſiſt in that which doth not perceive it.

HYL. I give up the point for the preſent, reſerving ſtill a right to retract my opinion, in caſe I ſhall hereafter diſcover any falſe ſtep in my progreſs to it.

PHIL. That is a right you cannot be denied.—Figure and extenſion being diſpatched, we proceed next to *motion*. Can a real motion in any external body be, at the ſame time, both very ſwift and very ſlow?

HYL. It cannot.

PHIL. Is not the motion of a body ſwift in a reciprocal proportion to the time it takes up in deſcribing any given ſpace? Thus, a body, that deſcribes a mile in an hour, moves three times faſter than it would in caſe it deſcribed only a mile in three hours.

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL. And is not time meaſured by the ſucceſſion of ideas in our minds?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And is it not poſſible ideas ſhould ſucceed one another twice as faſt, in your mind, as they

they do in mine, or in that of ſome ſpirit of another kind?

HYL. I own it.

PHIL. Conſequently the ſame body may, to another, ſeem to perform its motion, over any ſpace, in half the time that it does to you: and the ſame reaſoning will hold as to any other proportion: that is to ſay, according to your principles, (ſince the motions perceived are both really in the object,) it is poſſible one and the ſame body ſhall be really moved, the ſame way, at once, both very ſwift and very ſlow. How is this conſiſtent either with common ſenſe, or what you juſt now granted?

HYL. I have nothing to ſay to it.

PHIL. Then, as for *ſolidity*; either you do not mean any ſenſible quality by that word, and ſo it is beſide our inquiry; or, if you do, it muſt be either hardneſs or reſiſtance. But both the one and the other are plainly relative to our ſenſes; it being evident, that what ſeems hard, to one animal, may appear ſoft to another, who hath greater force and firmneſs of limbs. Nor is it leſs plain that the reſiſtance I feel is not in the body.

HYL. I own, the very ſenſation of reſiſtance, which is all you immediately perceive, is not in the *body*; but the cauſe of that ſenſation is.

PHIL. But the cauſes of our ſenſations are not things immediately perceived, and therefore not

ſenſible. This point I thought had been already determined.

Hyl. I own it was: but you will pardon me if I ſeem a little embarraſſed: I know not how to quit my old notions.

Phil. To help you out, do but conſider, that, if extenſion be once acknowledged to have no exiſtence without the mind, the ſame muſt neceſſarily be granted of motion, ſolidity, and gravity, ſince they all evidently ſuppoſe extenſion. It is, therefore, ſuperfluous to inquire particularly concerning each of them. In denying extenſion, you have denied them all to have any real exiſtence.

Hyl. I wonder, Philonous, if what you ſay be true, why thoſe philoſophers, who deny the ſecondary qualities any real exiſtence, ſhould yet attribute it to the primary. If there is no difference between them, how can this be accounted for?

Phil. It is not my buſineſs to account for every opinion of the philoſophers. But, among other reaſons which may be aſſigned for this, it ſeems probable, that pleaſure and pain, being rather annexed to the former than the latter, may be one. Heat and cold, taſtes and ſmells, have ſomething more vividly pleaſing, or diſagreeable, than the ideas of extenſion, figure, and motion, affect us with; and, it being too viſibly abſurd to hold, that pain or pleaſure can be in an unperceiving

perceiving ſubſtance, men are more eaſily weaned from believing the external exiſtence of the ſecondary, than the primary, qualities. You will be ſatisfied there is ſomething in this, if you recollect the difference you made between an intenſe and more moderate degree of heat, allowing the one a real exiſtence, while you denied it to the other. But, after all, there is no rational ground for that diſtinction; for ſurely an indifferent ſenſation is as truly *a ſenſation*, as one more pleaſing or painful; and, conſequently, ſhould not, any more than they, be ſuppoſed to exiſt in an unthinking ſubject.

HYL. It is juſt come into my head, Philonous, that I have ſomewhere heard of a diſtinction between abſolute and ſenſible extenſion. Now, though it be acknowledged that *great* and *ſmall*, conſiſting merely in the relation which other extended beings have to the parts of our own bodies, do not really inhere in the ſubſtances themſelves, yet nothing obliges us to hold the ſame with regard to *abſolute extenſion*, which is ſomething abſtracted from *great* and *ſmall*, from this or that particular magnitude or figure. So likewiſe, as to motion, *ſwift* and *ſlow* are altogether relative to the ſucceſſion of ideas in our own minds: but it doth not follow, becauſe thoſe modifications of motion exiſt not without the mind, that therefore abſolute motion, abſtracted from them, doth not.

PHIL. Pray, what is it that diſtinguiſhes one motion, or one part of extenſion, from another? Is it not ſomething ſenſible, as ſome degree of ſwiftneſs or ſlowneſs, ſome certain magnitude or figure, peculiar to each?

HYL. I think ſo.

PHIL. Theſe qualities, therefore, ſtripped of all ſenſible properties, are without all ſpecific and numerical differences, as the ſchools call them.

HYL. They are.

PHIL. That is to ſay, they are extenſion in general, and motion in general.

HYL. Let it be ſo.

PHIL. But it is an univerſally-received maxim, that *every thing which exiſts is particular.* How, then, can motion in general, or extenſion in general, exiſt in any corporeal ſubſtance?

HYL. I will take time to ſolve your difficulty.

PHIL. But I think the point may be ſpeedily decided. Without doubt you can tell whether you are able to frame this or that idea. Now, I am content to put our diſpute on this iſſue: If you can frame, in your thoughts, a diſtinct abſtract idea of motion or extenſion, diveſted of all thoſe ſenſible modes, as ſwift and ſlow, great and ſmall, round and ſquare, and the like, which are acknowledged to exiſt only in the mind, I will then yield the point you contend for: but, if you cannot, it will be unreaſonable, on your ſide, to inſiſt any longer upon what you have no notion of.

HYL.

HYL. To confeſs ingenuouſly, I cannot.

PHIL. Can you even ſeparate the ideas of extenſion and motion from the ideas of all thoſe qualities, which they, who make the diſtinction, term *ſecondary?*

HYL. What! is it not an eaſy matter to conſider extenſion and motion by themſelves, abſtracted from all other ſenſible qualities? Pray, how do the mathematicians treat of them?

PHIL. I acknowledge, Hylas, it is not difficult to form general propoſitions and reaſonings about thoſe qualities, without mentioning any other, and in this ſenſe to conſider or treat of them abſtractedly: but how doth it follow, that, becauſe I can pronounce the word, *motion*, by itſelf, I can form the idea of it, in my mind, excluſive of body? or, becauſe theorems may be made of extenſion and figure, without any mention of *great*, or *ſmall*, or any other ſenſible mode or quality, that therefore it is poſſible ſuch an abſtract idea of extenſion, without any particular ſize, or figure, or ſenſible quality, ſhould be diſtinctly formed and apprehended by the mind? Mathematicians treat of quantity, without regarding what other ſenſible qualities it is attended with, as being altogether indifferent to their demonſtrations: but when, laying aſide the words, they contemplate the bare ideas, I believe you will find they are not the pure abſtracted ideas of extenſion.

HYL. But what ſay you to *pure intellect?* May not abſtracted ideas be framed by that faculty?

PHIL. Since I cannot frame abſtract ideas at all, it is plain I cannot frame them by the help of *pure intellect*, whatſoever faculty you underſtand by thoſe words. Beſides, (not to inquire into the nature of pure intellect, and its ſpiritual objects, as *virtue*, *reaſon*, *God*, or the like,) thus much ſeems manifeſt, that ſenſible things are only to be perceived by ſenſe, or repreſented by the imagination: figure, therefore, and extenſion, being originally perceived by ſenſe, do not belong to pure intellect. But, for your farther ſatisfaction, try if you can frame the idea of any figure, abſtracted from all particularities of ſize, or even from other ſenſible qualities.

HYL. Let me think a little. — I do not find that I can.

PHIL. And can you think it poſſible, that ſhould really exiſt in nature, which implies a repugnancy in its conception?

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. Since, therefore, it is impoſſible, even for the mind, to diſunite the ideas of extenſion and motion from all other ſenſible qualities, doth it not follow, that, where the one exiſt, there neceſſarily the other exiſt likewiſe?

HYL. It ſhould ſeem ſo.

PHIL. Conſequently, the very ſame arguments, which you admitted as concluſive againſt the ſecondary

condary qualities, are, without any farther application, of force againſt the primary too. Beſides, if you will truſt your ſenſes, is it not plain all ſenſible qualities co-exiſt, or, to them, appear as being in the ſame place? Do they ever repreſent a motion, or figure, as being diveſted of all other viſible and tangible qualities?

Hyl. You need ſay no more on this head. I am free to own, if there be no ſecret error or overſight in our proceedings hitherto, that all ſenſible qualities are alike to be denied exiſtence without the mind: but my fear is, that I have been too liberal in my former conceſſions, or overlooked ſome fallacy or other. In ſhort, I did not take time to think.

Phil. For that matter, Hylas, you may take what time you pleaſe in reviewing the progreſs of our inquiry. You are at liberty to recover any ſlips you might have made, or offer whatever you have omitted which makes for your firſt opinion.

Hyl. One great overſight I take to be this: that I did not ſufficiently diſtinguiſh the *object* from the *ſenſation*. Now, though this latter may not exiſt without the mind, yet it will not thence follow that the former cannot.

Phil. What object do you mean? the object of the ſenſes?

Hyl. The ſame.

Phil. It is, then, immediately perceived.

Hyl.

HYL. Right.

PHIL. Make me to underſtand the difference between what is immediately perceived and a ſenſation.

HYL. The ſenſation I take to be an act of the mind perceiving: beſides which, there is ſomething perceived; and this I call the *object*. For example, there is red and yellow on that tulip: but, then, the act of perceiving thoſe colours is in me only, and not in the tulip.

PHIL. What tulip do you ſpeak of? is it that which you ſee?

HYL. The ſame.

PHIL. And what do you ſee beſide colour, figure, and extenſion?

HYL. Nothing.

PHIL. What you would ſay, then, is, that the red and yellow are co-exiſtent with the extenſion; is it not?

HYL. That is not all: I would ſay, they have a real exiſtence without the mind, in ſome unthinking ſubſtance.

PHIL. That the colours are really in the tulip which I ſee, is manifeſt: neither can it be denied that this tulip may exiſt independent of your mind or mine: but that any immediate object of the ſenſes (that is, any idea, or combination of ideas) ſhould exiſt in an unthinking ſubſtance, or exterior to all minds, is in itſelf an evident contradiction. Nor can I imagine how this follows from

from what you ſaid juſt now, (to wit, that the red and yellow were on the tulip *you ſaw,*) ſince you do not pretend to *ſee* that unthinking ſubſtance.

HYL. You have an artful way, Philonous, of diverting our inquiry from the ſubject.

PHIL. I ſee you have no mind to be preſſed that way. To return, then, to your diſtinction between *ſenſation* and *object*: if I take you right, you diſtinguiſh, in every perception, two things; the one an action of the mind, the other not.

HYL. True.

PHIL. And this action cannot exiſt in, or belong to, any unthinking thing; but whatever beſide is implied in a perception may.

HYL. That is my meaning.

PHIL. So that, if there were a perception without any act of the mind, it were poſſible ſuch a perception ſhould exiſt in an unthinking ſubſtance.

HYL. I grant it. But it is impoſſible there ſhould be ſuch a perception.

PHIL. When is the mind ſaid to be active?

HYL. When it produces, puts an end to, or changes, any thing.

PHIL. Can the mind produce, diſcontinue, or change, any thing, but by an act of the will?

HYL. It cannot.

PHIL. The mind, therefore, is to be accounted active, in its perceptions, ſo far forth as volition is included in them.

HYL.

HYL. It is.

PHIL. In plucking this flower, I am active, becauſe I do it by the motion of my hand, which was conſequent upon my volition: ſo likewiſe in applying it to my noſe. But is either of theſe ſmelling?

HYL. No.

PHIL. I act, too, in drawing the air through my noſe; becauſe my breathing ſo, rather than otherwiſe, is the effect of my volition. But neither can this be called *ſmelling*; for, if it were, I ſhould ſmell every time I breathed in that manner.

HYL. True.

PHIL. Smelling, then, is ſomewhat conſequent to all this.

HYL. It is.

PHIL. But I do not find my will concerned any farther. Whatever more there is, (as that I perceive ſuch a particular ſmell, or any ſmell at all,) this is independent of my will, and therein I am altogether paſſive. Do you find it otherwiſe with you, Hylas?

HYL. No; the very ſame.

PHIL. Then, as to ſeeing, is it not in your power to open your eyes, or keep them ſhut; to turn them this or that way?

HYL. Without doubt.

PHIL. But doth it in like manner depend on your will, that, in looking on this flower, you perceive

perceive *white*, rather than any other colour? or, directing your open eyes toward yonder part of the heaven, can you avoid ſeeing the ſun? or is light or darkneſs the effect of your volition?

HYL. No, certainly.

PHIL. You are, then, in theſe reſpects, altogether paſſive.

HYL. I am.

PHIL. Tell me, now, whether *ſeeing* conſiſts in perceiving light and colours, or in opening and turning the eyes.

HYL. Without doubt, in the former.

PHIL. Since, therefore, you are, in the very perception of light and colours, altogether paſſive, what is become of that action you were ſpeaking of, as an ingredient in every ſenſation? And doth it not follow, from your own conceſſions, that the perception of light and colours, including no action in it, may exiſt in an unperceiving ſubſtance? and is not this a plain contradiction?

HYL. I know not what to think of it.

PHIL. Beſides, ſince you diſtinguiſh the *active* and *paſſive* in every perception, you muſt do it in that of pain. But how is it poſſible that pain, be it as little active as you pleaſe, ſhould exiſt in an unperceiving ſubſtance? In ſhort, do but conſider the point, and then confeſs, ingenuouſly, whether light and colours, taſtes, ſounds, *&c.* are not all equally paſſions or ſenſations in the ſoul. You may, indeed, call them *external objects*,

jects, and give them, in words, what ſubſiſtence you pleaſe: but examine your own thoughts, and then tell me whether it be not as I ſay.

Hyl. I acknowledge, Philonous, that, upon a fair obſervation of what paſſes in my mind, I can diſcover nothing elſe but that I am a thinking being, affected with variety of ſenſations; neither is it poſſible to conceive how a ſenſation ſhould exiſt in an unperceiving ſubſtance. But then, on the other hand, when I look on ſenſible things in a different view, conſidering them as ſo many modes and qualities, I find it neceſſary to ſuppoſe a material *ſubſtratum*, without which they cannot be conceived to exiſt.

Phil. *Material ſubſtratum*, call you it? Pray, by which of your ſenſes came you acquainted with that being?

Hyl. It is not itſelf ſenſible; its modes and qualities only being perceived by the ſenſes.

Phil. I preſume, then, it was by reflexion and reaſon you obtained the idea of it.

Hyl. I do not pretend to any proper, poſitive, idea of it. However, I conclude it exiſts, becauſe qualities cannot be conceived to exiſt without a ſupport.

Phil. It ſeems, then, you have only a relative notion of it, or that you conceive it not otherwiſe than by conceiving the relation it bears to ſenſible qualities.

Hyl. Right.

Phil.

PHIL. Be pleaſed, therefore, to let me know wherein that relation conſiſts.

HYL. Is it not ſufficiently expreſſed in the term, *ſubſtratum*, or *ſubſtance?*

PHIL. If ſo, the word, *ſubſtratum*, ſhould import, that it is ſpread under the ſenſible qualities or accidents.

HYL. True.

PHIL. And, conſequently, under extenſion.

HYL. I own it.

PHIL. It is, therefore, ſomewhat in its own nature entirely diſtinct from extenſion.

HYL. I tell you, extenſion is only a mode, and matter is ſomething that ſupports modes. And is it not evident the thing ſupported is different from the thing ſupporting?

PHIL. So that ſomething, diſtinct from, and excluſive of, extenſion, is ſuppoſed to be the *ſubſtratum* of extenſion.

HYL. Juſt ſo.

PHIL. Anſwer me, Hylas: can a thing be ſpread without extenſion; or is not the idea of extenſion neceſſarily included in *ſpreading?*

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Whatſoever, therefore, you ſuppoſe ſpread under any thing muſt have in itſelf an extenſion diſtinct from the extenſion of that thing under which it is ſpread.

HYL. It muſt.

PHIL.

PHIL. Conſequently every corporeal ſubſtance, being the *ſubſtratum* of extenſion, muſt have in itſelf another extenſion, by which it is qualified to be a *ſubſtratum*: and ſo on to infinity. And I aſk, whether this be not abſurd in itſelf, and repugnant to what you granted juſt now; to wit, that the *ſubſtratum* was ſomething diſtinct from, and excluſive of, extenſion.

HYL. Aye, but, Philonous, you take me wrong. I do not mean that matter is *ſpread*, in a groſs literal ſenſe, under extenſion. The word, *ſubſtratum*, is uſed only to expreſs, in general, the ſame thing with *ſubſtance*.

PHIL. Well, then, let us examine the relation implied in the term, *ſubſtance*. Is it not, that it ſtands under accidents?

HYL. The very ſame.

PHIL. But, that one thing may ſtand under or ſupport another, muſt it not be extended?

HYL. It muſt.

PHIL. Is not, therefore, this ſuppoſition liable to the ſame abſurdity with the former?

HYL. You ſtill take things in a ſtrict literal ſenſe: that is not fair, Philonous.

PHIL. I am not for impoſing any ſenſe on your words: you are at liberty to explain them as you pleaſe: only, I beſeech you, make me underſtand ſomething by them. You tell me, matter ſupports, or ſtands under, accidents. How! is it as your legs ſupport your body?

HYL.

HYL. No; that is the literal ſenſe.

PHIL. Pray, let me know any ſenſe, literal or not literal, that you underſtand it in. — How long muſt I wait for an anſwer, Hylas?

HYL. I declare I know not what to ſay. I once thought I underſtood well enough what was meant by matter's ſupporting accidents; but, now, the more I think on it, the leſs can I comprehend it: in ſhort, I find that I know nothing of it.

PHIL. It ſeems, then, you have no idea at all, neither relative nor poſitive, of matter; you know neither what it is in itſelf, nor what relation it bears to accidents.

HYL. I acknowledge it.

PHIL. And yet you aſſerted, that you could not conceive how qualities or accidents ſhould really exiſt, without conceiving, at the ſame time, a material ſupport of them.

HYL. I did.

PHIL. That is to ſay, when you conceive the real exiſtence of qualities, you do withal conceive ſomething which you cannot conceive.

HYL. It was wrong, I own. But ſtill I fear there is ſome fallacy or other. Pray, what think you of this? it is juſt come into my head, that the ground of all our miſtake lies in your treating of each quality by itſelf. Now, I grant, that each quality cannot ſingly ſubſiſt without the mind: colour cannot, without extenſion; neither can figure, without ſome other ſenſible quality.

But, as the ſeveral qualities, united or blended together, form entire ſenſible things, nothing hinders why ſuch things may not be ſuppoſed to exiſt without the mind.

PHIL. Either, Hylas, you are jeſting, or have a very bad memory. Though, indeed, we went through all the qualities, by name, one after another, yet my arguments, or rather your conceſſions, no where tended to prove that the ſecondary qualities did not ſubſiſt each alone by itſelf, but that they were not *at all* without the mind. Indeed, in treating of figure and motion, we concluded they could not exiſt without the mind, becauſe it was impoſſible, even in thought, to ſeparate them from all ſecondary qualities, ſo as to conceive them exiſting by themſelves. But then this was not the only argument made uſe of upon that occaſion. But (to paſs by all that hath been hitherto ſaid, and reckon it for nothing, if you will have it ſo) I am content to put the whole upon this iſſue: if you can conceive it poſſible for any mixture or combination of qualities, or any ſenſible object whatever, to exiſt without the mind, then I will grant it actually to be ſo.

HYL. If it comes to that, the point will ſoon be decided. What more eaſy than to conceive a tree or houſe exiſting by itſelf, independent of, and unperceived by, any mind whatſoever? I do, at this preſent time, conceive them exiſting after that manner.

PHIL.

PHIL. How ſay you, Hylas, can you ſee a thing which is at the ſame time unſeen?

HYL. No; that were a contradiction.

PHIL. Is it not as great a contradiction to talk of *conceiving* a thing which is *unconceived?*

HYL. It is.

PHIL. The tree or houſe, therefore, which you think of, is conceived by you.

HYL. How ſhould it be otherwiſe?

PHIL. And what is conceived is ſurely in the mind.

HYL. Without queſtion, that which is conceived is in the mind.

PHIL. How, then, came you to ſay, you conceived a houſe, or tree, exiſting independent and out of all minds whatſoever?

HYL. That was, I own, an overſight: but ſtay, let me conſider what led me into it. — It is a pleaſant miſtake enough. As I was thinking of a tree, in a ſolitary place, where no one was preſent to ſee it, methought that was to conceive a tree as exiſting unperceived or unthought of; not conſidering that I myſelf conceived it all the while. But now I plainly ſee that all I can do is to frame ideas in my own mind. I may, indeed, conceive, in my own thoughts, the idea of a tree, or a houſe, or a mountain; but that is all. And this is far from proving that I can conceive them *exiſting out of the minds of all ſpirits.*

PHIL. You acknowledge, then, that you cannot poſſibly conceive how any one corporeal ſenſible thing ſhould exiſt otherwiſe than in a mind.

HYL. I do.

PHIL. And yet you will earneſtly contend for the truth of that which you cannot ſo much as conceive.

HYL. I profeſs I know not what to think; but ſtill there are ſome ſcruples remain with me. Is it not certain I ſee things at a diſtance? do we not perceive the ſtars and moon, for example, to be a great way off? Is not this, I ſay, manifeſt to the ſenſes?

PHIL. Do you not in a dream, too, perceive thoſe or the like objects?

HYL. I do.

PHIL. And have they not then the ſame appearance of being diſtant?

HYL. They have.

PHIL. But you do not thence conclude the apparitions in a dream to be without the mind.

HYL. By no means.

PHIL. You ought not, therefore, to conclude, that ſenſible objects are without the mind, from their appearance, or manner, wherein they are perceived.

HYL. I acknowledge it. But doth not my ſenſe deceive me in thoſe caſes?

PHIL. By no means. The idea or thing which you immediately perceive, neither ſenſe nor reaſon informs

informs you that it actually exiſts without the mind. By ſenſe you only know that you are affected with ſuch certain ſenſations of light and colours, *&c.* and theſe you will not ſay are without the mind.

HYL. True. But, beſides all that, do you not think the ſight ſuggeſts ſomething of *outneſs* or *diſtance?*

PHIL. Upon approaching a diſtant object, do the viſible ſize and figure change perpetually, or do they appear the ſame at all diſtances?

HYL. They are in a continual change.

PHIL. Sight, therefore, does not ſuggeſt, or any way inform you, that the viſible object, you immediately perceive, exiſts at a diſtance,* or will be perceived when you advance farther onward; there being a continued ſeries of viſible objects, ſucceeding each other, during the whole time of your approach.

HYL. It does not: but ſtill I know, upon ſeeing an object, what object I ſhall perceive after having paſſed over a certain diſtance: no matter whether it be exactly the ſame or not; there is ſtill ſomething of diſtance ſuggeſted in the caſe.

PHIL. Good Hylas, do but reflect a little on the point, and then tell me whether there be any more in it than this: From the ideas you actually perceive by ſight, you have, by experience,

* See the Eſſay towards a new Theory of Viſion; and its Vindication.

learned to collect what other ideas you will (according to the ſtanding order of nature) be affected with, after ſuch a certain ſucceſſion of time and motion.

HYL. Upon the whole, I take it to be nothing elſe.

PHIL. Now, is it not plain, that, if we ſuppoſe a man born blind were on a ſudden made to ſee, he could at firſt have no experience of what may be ſuggeſted by ſight?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. He would not then, according to you, have any notion of diſtance annexed to the things he ſaw; but would take them for a new ſet of ſenſations exiſting only in his mind.

HYL. It is undeniable.

PHIL. But, to make it ſtill more plain: is not *diſtance* a line turned endwiſe to the eye?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. And can a line, ſo ſituated, be perceived by ſight?

HYL. It cannot.

PHIL. Does it not, therefore, follow, that diſtance is not properly and immediately perceived by ſight?

HYL. It ſhould ſeem ſo.

PHIL. Again: is it your opinion, that colours are at a diſtance?

HYL. It muſt be acknowledged, they are only in the mind.

PHIL.

PHIL. But do not colours appear to the eye as co-exiſting in the ſame place with extenſion and figure?

HYL. They do.

PHIL. How can you then conclude, from ſight, that figure exiſts without, when you acknowledge colours do not; the ſenſible appearance being the very ſame with regard to both?

HYL. I know not what to anſwer.

PHIL. But, allowing that diſtance were truly and immediately perceived by the mind, yet it would not thence follow, it exiſted out of the mind: for whatever is immediately perceived is an idea; and can any *idea* exiſt out of the mind?

HYL. To ſuppoſe that, were abſurd. But inform me, Philonous, can we perceive or know nothing beſides our ideas?

PHIL. As for the rational deducing of cauſes from effects, that is beſide our inquiry; and by the ſenſes you can beſt tell whether you perceive any thing which is not immediately perceived: and I aſk you whether the things immediately perceived are other than your own ſenſations or ideas? You have, indeed, more than once, in the courſe of this converſation, declared yourſelf on thoſe points; but you ſeem, by this laſt queſtion, to have departed from what you then thought.

HYL. To ſpeak the truth, Philonous, I think there are two kinds of objects; the one perceived

learned to collect what other ideas you will (according to the ſtanding order of nature) be affected with, after ſuch a certain ſucceſſion of time and motion.

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HYL. I know not what to anſwer.

PHIL. But, allowing that diſtance were truly and immediately perceived by the mind, yet it would not thence follow, it exiſted out of the mind: for whatever is immediately perceived is an idea; and can any *idea* exiſt out of the mind?

HYL. To ſuppoſe that, were abſurd. But inform me, Philonous, can we perceive or know nothing beſides our ideas?

PHIL. As for the rational deducing of cauſes from effects, that is beſide our inquiry; and by the ſenſes you can beſt tell whether you perceive any thing which is not immediately perceived: and I aſk you whether the things immediately perceived are other than your own ſenſations or ideas? You have, indeed, more than once, in the courſe of this converſation, declared yourſelf on thoſe points; but you ſeem, by this laſt queſtion, to have departed from what you then thought.

HYL. To ſpeak the truth, Philonous, I think there are two kinds of objects; the one perceived

immediately, which are likewiſe called *ideas*; the other are real things, or external objects, perceived by the mediation of ideas, which are their images and repreſentations. Now, I own, ideas do not exiſt without the mind; but the latter ſort of objects do. I am ſorry I did not think of this diſtinction ſooner; it would, probably, have cut ſhort your diſcourſe.

PHIL. Are thoſe external objects perceived by ſenſe, or by ſome other faculty?

HYL. They are perceived by ſenſe.

PHIL. How! is there any thing perceived by ſenſe which is not immediately perceived?

HYL. Yes, Philonous, in ſome ſort there is. For example, when I look on a picture or ſtatue of Julius Cæſar, I may be ſaid, after a manner, to perceive him (though not immediately) by my ſenſes.

PHIL. It ſeems, then, you will have our ideas, which alone are immediately perceived, to be pictures of external things; and that theſe alſo are perceived by ſenſe, inaſmuch as they have a conformity or reſemblance to our ideas.

HYL. That is my meaning.

PHIL. And in the ſame way that Julius Cæſar, in himſelf inviſible, is nevertheleſs perceived by ſight, real things, in themſelves imperceptible, are perceived by ſenſe.

HYL. In the very ſame.

PHIL.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, when you behold the picture of Julius Cæſar, do you ſee with your eyes any more than ſome colours and figures, with a certain ſymmetry and compoſition of the whole?

HYL. Nothing elſe.

PHIL. And would not a man, who had never known any thing of Julius Cæſar, ſee as much?

HYL. He would.

PHIL. Conſequently, he hath his ſight, and the uſe of it, in as perfect a degree as you.

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL. Whence comes it, then, that your thoughts are directed to the Roman emperor, and his are not? This cannot proceed from the ſenſations, or ideas of ſenſe, by you then perceived, ſince you acknowledge you have no advantage over him in that reſpect. It ſhould ſeem, therefore, to proceed from reaſon and memory; ſhould it not?

HYL. It ſhould.

PHIL. Conſequently, it will not follow, from that inſtance, that any thing is perceived, by ſenſe, which is not immediately perceived. Though I grant we may, in one acceptation, be ſaid to perceive ſenſible things mediately by ſenſe; that is, when, from a frequently-perceived connexion, the immediate perception of ideas, by one ſenſe, ſuggeſts to the mind others, perhaps belonging to another ſenſe, which are wont to be

connected

connected with them. For inſtance, when I hear a coach drive along the ſtreets, immediately I perceive only the ſound; but, from the experience I have had that ſuch a ſound is connected with a coach, I am ſaid to hear the coach. It is, nevertheleſs, evident that, in truth and ſtrictneſs, nothing can be *heard* but *ſound*; and the coach is not then properly perceived by ſenſe, but ſuggeſted from experience. So likewiſe, when we are ſaid to ſee a red-hot bar of iron, the ſolidity and heat of the iron are not the objects of ſight, but ſuggeſted to the imagination by the colour and figure, which are properly perceived by that ſenſe. In ſhort, thoſe things alone are actually and ſtrictly perceived by any ſenſe, which would have been perceived in caſe that ſame ſenſe had then been firſt conferred on us. As for other things, it is plain they are only ſuggeſted to the mind by experience, grounded on former perceptions. But, to return to your compariſon of Cæſar's picture, it is plain, if you keep to that, you muſt hold, the real things, or archetypes of our ideas, are not perceived by ſenſe, but by ſome internal faculty of the ſoul, as reaſon or memory. I would therefore fain know what arguments you can draw, from reaſon, for the exiſtence of what you call *real things*, or *material objects*; or whether you remember to have ſeen them formerly, as they are in themſelves; or if you have heard or read of any one that did.

HYL.

HYL. I ſee, Philonous, you are diſpoſed to raillery; but that will never convince me.

PHIL. My aim is only to learn, from you, the way to come at the knowledge of *material beings*. Whatever we perceive is perceived either immediately or mediately; by ſenſe, or by reaſon and reflexion. But, as you have excluded ſenſe, pray, ſhew me what reaſon you have to believe their exiſtence; or what *medium* you can poſſibly make uſe of, to prove it either to mine or your own underſtanding.

HYL. To deal ingenuouſly, Philonous, now I conſider the point, I do not find I can give you any good reaſon for it: but thus much ſeems pretty plain, that it is at leaſt poſſible ſuch things may really exiſt; and, as long as there is no abſurdity in ſuppoſing them, I am reſolved to believe as I did, till you bring good reaſons to the contrary.

PHIL. What! is it come to this, that you only believe the exiſtence of material objects, and that your belief is founded barely on the poſſibility of its being true? Then you will have me bring reaſons againſt it; though another would think it reaſonable the proof ſhould lie on him who holds the affirmative. And, after all, this very point, which you are now reſolved to maintain without any reaſon, is, in effect, what you have, more than once, during this diſcourſe, ſeen good reaſon to give up. But, to paſs over all this: if I

underſtand

underſtand you rightly, you ſay, our ideas do not exiſt without the mind; but that they are copies, images, or repreſentations, of certain originals that do.

HYL. You take me right.

PHIL. They are, then, like external things.

HYL. They are.

PHIL. Have thoſe things a ſtable and permanent nature, independent of our ſenſes; or are they in a perpetual change, upon our producing any motions in our bodies, ſuſpending, exerting, or altering our faculties or organs of ſenſe?

HYL. Real things, it is plain, have a fixed and real nature, which remains the ſame notwithſtanding any change in our ſenſes, or in the poſture and motion of our bodies; which, indeed, may affect the ideas in our minds, but it were abſurd to think they had the ſame effect on things exiſting without the mind.

PHIL. How, then, is it poſſible, that things perpetually fleeting and variable, as our ideas, ſhould be copies or images of any thing fixed and conſtant? Or, in other words, ſince all ſenſible qualities, as ſize, figure, colour, *&c.* (that is, our ideas,) are continually changing upon every alteration in the diſtance, medium, or inſtruments of ſenſation, how can any determinate material objects be properly repreſented or painted forth by ſeveral diſtinct things, each of which is ſo different from and unlike the reſt? Or, if you ſay it reſembles

reſembles ſome one only of our ideas, how ſhall we be able to diſtinguiſh the true copy from all the falſe ones?

HYL. I profeſs, Philonous, I am at a loſs: I know not what to ſay to this.

PHIL. But neither is this all. Which are material objects in themſelves, perceptible or imperceptible?

HYL. Properly and immediately, nothing can be perceived but ideas. All material things, therefore, are in themſelves inſenſible, and to be perceived only by their ideas.

PHIL. Ideas, then, are ſenſible; and their archetypes, or originals, inſenſible.

HYL. Right.

PHIL. But how can that which is ſenſible be like that which is inſenſible? Can a real thing, in itſelf *inviſible*, be like a *colour*; or a real thing, which is not *audible*, be like a *ſound?* In a word, can any thing be like a ſenſation, or idea, but another ſenſation or idea?

HYL. I muſt own, I think not.

PHIL. Is it poſſible there ſhould be any doubt in the point? Do you not perfectly know your own ideas?

HYL. I know them perfectly; ſince what I do not perceive, or know, can be no part of my idea.

PHIL. Conſider, therefore, and examine them; and then tell me if there be any thing in them which can exiſt without the mind, or if you can

conceive

conceive any thing like them exiſting without the mind.

HYL. Upon inquiry, I find it is impoſſible for me to conceive or underſtand how any thing but an idea can be like an idea: and it is moſt evident, that *no idea can exiſt without the mind.*

PHIL. You are, therefore, by your principles, forced to deny the reality of ſenſible things, ſince you made it to conſiſt in an abſolute exiſtence, exterior to the mind; that is to ſay, you are a downright *ſceptic.* So I have gained my point; which was, to ſhew your principles led to ſcepticiſm.

HYL. For the preſent, I am, if not entirely convinced, at leaſt ſilenced.

PHIL. I would fain know what more you would require, in order to a perfect conviction. Have you not had the liberty of explaining yourſelf all manner of ways? Were any little ſlips in diſcourſe laid hold and inſiſted on? or were you not allowed to retract or reinforce any thing you had offered, as beſt ſerved your purpoſe? Has not every thing you could ſay been heard and examined with all the fairneſs imaginable? In a word, have you not, in every point, been convinced out of your own mouth? And, if you can, at preſent, diſcover any flaw in any of your former conceſſions, or think of any remaining ſubterfuge, any new diſtinction, colour, or comment, whatſoever, why do you not produce it?

HYL.

HYL. A little patience, Philonous. I am, at preſent, ſo amazed to ſee myſelf enſnared, and, as it were, impriſoned, in the labyrinths you have drawn me into, that on the ſudden it cannot be expected I ſhould find my way out. You muſt give me time to look about me and recollect myſelf.

PHIL. Hark! is not this the college-bell?

HYL. It rings for prayers.

PHIL. We will go in, then, if you pleaſe, and meet here again to-morrow morning. In the mean time you may employ your thoughts on this morning's diſcourſe, and try if you can find any fallacy in it, or invent any new means to extricate yourſelf.

HYL. Agreed.

THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

HYLAS.

I Beg your pardon, Philonous, for not meeting you ſooner. All this morning my head was ſo filled with our late converſation, that I had not leiſure to think of the time of day, or, indeed, of any thing elſe.

PHIL. I am glad you were ſo intent upon it, in hopes, if there were any miſtakes in your conceſſions, or fallacies in my reaſonings from them, you will now diſcover them to me.

HYL. I aſſure you, I have done nothing, ever ſince I ſaw you, but ſearch after miſtakes and fallacies; and, with that view, have minutely examined the whole ſeries of yeſterday's diſcourſe: but all in vain; for the notions it led me into, upon review, appear ſtill more clear and evident; and, the more I conſider them, the more irreſiſtibly do they force my aſſent.

PHIL. And is not this, think you, a ſign that they are genuine, that they proceed from nature, and

and are conformable to right reaſon? Truth and beauty are, in this, alike, that the ſtricteſt ſurvey ſets them both off to advantage; while the falſe luſtre of error and diſguiſe cannot endure being reviewed or too nearly inſpected.

HYL. I own there is a great deal in what you ſay: nor can any one be more entirely ſatisfied of the truth of thoſe odd conſequences, ſo long as I have in view the reaſonings that lead to them: but, when theſe are out of my thoughts, there ſeems, on the other hand, ſomething ſo ſatisfactory, ſo natural and intelligible, in the modern way of explaining things, that I profeſs I know not how to reject it.

PHIL. I know not what way you mean.

HYL. I mean the way of accounting for our ſenſations or ideas.

PHIL. How is that?

HYL. It is ſuppoſed the ſoul makes her reſidence in ſome part of the brain, from which the nerves take their riſe, and are thence extended to all parts of the body; and that outward objects, by the different impreſſions they make on the organs of ſenſe, communicate certain vibrative motions to the nerves; and theſe, being filled with ſpirits, propagate them to the brain, or ſeat of the ſoul; which, according to the various impreſſions or traces thereby made in the brain, is variouſly affected with ideas.

PHIL. And call you this an explication of the manner whereby we are affected with ideas?

HYL. Why not, Philonous; have you any thing to object againſt it?

PHIL. I would firſt know whether I rightly underſtand your hypotheſis. You make certain traces in the brain to be the cauſes or occaſions of our ideas: pray, tell me whether, by the *brain*, you mean any ſenſible thing.

HYL. What elſe think you I could mean?

PHIL. Senſible things are all immediately perceivable; and thoſe things which are immediately perceivable are ideas; and theſe exiſt only in the mind. Thus much you have, if I miſtake not, long ſince agreed to.

HYL. I do not deny it.

PHIL. The brain, therefore, you ſpeak of, being a ſenſible thing, exiſts only in the mind. Now, I would fain know, whether you think it reaſonable to ſuppoſe, that one idea or thing, exiſting in the mind, occaſions all other ideas: and, if you think ſo, pray, how do you account for the origin of that primary idea or brain itſelf?

HYL. I do not explain the origin of our ideas by that brain which is perceivable to ſenſe, this being itſelf only a combination of ſenſible ideas; but by another, which I imagine.

PHIL. But are not things imagined as truly in the mind as things perceived?

HYL. I muſt confeſs, they are.

PHIL.

PHIL. It comes, therefore, to the ſame thing; and you have been all this while accounting for ideas by certain motions or impreſſions in the brain; that is, by ſome alterations in an idea, whether ſenſible or imaginable, it matters not.

HYL. I begin to ſuſpect my hypotheſis.

PHIL. Beſide ſpirits, all that we know, or conceive, are our own ideas. When, therefore, you ſay, all ideas are occaſioned by impreſſions in the brain, do you conceive this brain, or not? If you do, then you talk of ideas imprinted in an idea, cauſing that ſame idea; which is abſurd. If you do not conceive it, you talk unintelligibly, inſtead of forming a reaſonable hypotheſis.

HYL. I now clearly ſee it was a mere dream. There is nothing in it.

PHIL. You need not be much concerned at it; for, after all, this way of explaining things, as you called it, could never have ſatisfied any reaſonable man. What connexion is there between a motion in the nerves, and the ſenſations of ſound or colour in the mind? or how is it poſſible theſe ſhould be the effect of that?

HYL. But I could never think it had ſo little in it as now it ſeems to have.

PHIL. Well, then, are you at length ſatisfied that no ſenſible things have a real exiſtence, and that you are in truth an arrant *ſceptic?*

HYL. It is too plain to be denied.

PHIL. Look! are not the fields covered with a delightful verdure? Is there not ſomething, in the woods and groves, in the rivers and clear ſprings, that ſoothes, that delights, that tranſports, the ſoul? At the proſpect of the wide and deep ocean, or ſome huge mountain whoſe top is loſt in the clouds, or of an old gloomy foreſt, are not our minds filled with a pleaſing horror? Even in rocks and deſerts is there not an agreeable wildneſs? How ſincere a pleaſure is it to behold the natural beauties of the earth! To preſerve and renew our reliſh for them, is not the veil of night alternately drawn over her face; and doth ſhe not change her dreſs with the ſeaſons? How aptly are the elements diſpoſed! What variety and uſe in the meaneſt productions of nature! What delicacy, what beauty, what contrivance, in animal and vegetable bodies! How exquiſitely are all things ſuited, as well to their particular ends, as to conſtitute appoſite parts of the whole! and, while they mutually aid and ſupport, do they not alſo ſet off and illuſtrate, each other? Raiſe now your thoughts, from this ball of earth, to all thoſe glorious luminaries that adorn the high arch of heaven. The motion and ſituation of the planets, are they not admirable for uſe and order? Were thoſe (miſcalled *erratic*) globes ever known to ſtray, in their repeated journeys through the pathleſs void? do they not meaſure areas, round the ſun, ever proportioned to the

the times? ſo fixed, ſo immutable, are the laws by which the unſeen Author of nature actuates the univerſe. How vivid and radiant is the luſtre of the fixed ſtars! how magnificent and rich that negligent profuſion with which they appear to be ſcattered throughout the whole azure vault! Yet, if you take the teleſcope, it brings into your ſight a new hoſt of ſtars, that eſcape the naked eye. Here they ſeem contiguous and minute; but, to a nearer view, immenſe orbs of light, at various diſtances, far ſunk in the abyſs of ſpace. Now you muſt call imagination to your aid. The feeble narrow ſenſe cannot deſcry innumerable worlds revolving round the central fires, and, in thoſe worlds, the energy of an all-perfect mind, diſplayed in endleſs forms. But neither ſenſe nor imagination is big enough to comprehend the boundleſs extent, with all its glittering furniture. Though the labouring mind exert and ſtrain each power to its utmoſt reach, there ſtill ſtands out, ungraſped, a ſurpluſage immeaſurable. Yet all the vaſt bodies that compoſe this mighty frame, how diſtant and remote ſoever, are, by ſome ſecret mechaniſm, ſome divine art and force, linked in a mutual dependence and intercourſe with each other; even with this earth, which was almoſt ſlipt from my thoughts, and loſt in the croud of worlds. Is not the whole ſyſtem immenſe, beautiful, glorious, beyond expreſſion and beyond thought! What treatment, then, do thoſe phi-

loſophers deſerve, who would deprive theſe noble and delightful ſcenes of all reality? How ſhould thoſe principles be entertained, that lead us to think all the viſible beauty of the creation a falſe imaginary glare? To be plain, can you expect this ſcepticiſm of yours will not be thought extravagantly abſurd by all men of ſenſe?

HYL. Other men may think as they pleaſe: but, for your part, you have nothing to reproach me with. My comfort is, you are as much a *ſceptic* as I am.

PHIL. There, Hylas, I muſt beg leave to differ from you.

HYL. What! have you all along agreed to the premiſes, and do you now deny the concluſion, and leave me to maintain thoſe paradoxes, by myſelf, which you led me into? This ſurely is not fair.

PHIL. I deny that I agreed with you in thoſe notions that led to ſcepticiſm. You, indeed, ſaid, the reality of ſenſible things conſiſted in an *abſolute exiſtence* out of the minds of ſpirits, or diſtinct from their being perceived: and, purſuant to this notion of reality, you are obliged to deny ſenſible things any real exiſtence; that is, according to your own definition, you profeſs yourſelf a *ſceptic*. But I neither ſaid, nor thought, the reality of ſenſible things was to be defined after that manner. To me it is evident, for the reaſons you allow of, that ſenſible things cannot exiſt otherwiſe than in

a mind

a mind or ſpirit: whence I conclude, not that they have no real exiſtence, but that (ſeeing they depend not on my thought, and have an exiſtence diſtinct from being perceived by me) *there muſt be ſome other mind wherein they exiſt.* As ſure, therefore, as the ſenſible world really exiſts, ſo ſure is there an infinite omnipreſent Spirit, who contains and ſupports it.

HYL. What! this is no more than I and all Chriſtians hold; nay, and all others, too, who believe there is a God, and that he knows and comprehends all things.

PHIL. Aye; but here lies the difference: men commonly believe that all things are known or perceived by God, becauſe they believe the being of a God; whereas I, on the other ſide, immediately and neceſſarily conclude the being of a God, becauſe all ſenſible things muſt be perceived by him.

HYL. But, ſo long as we all believe the ſame thing, what matter is it how we come by that belief?

PHIL. But neither do we agree in the ſame opinion: for philoſophers, though they acknowledge all corporeal beings to be perceived by God, yet they attribute to them an abſolute ſubſiſtence, diſtinct from their being perceived by any mind whatever; which I do not. Beſides, is there no difference between ſaying, *There is a God; therefore he perceives all things:* and ſaying, *Senſible*

things do really exiſt; and, if they really exiſt, they are neceſſarily perceived by an infinite Mind: therefore there is an infinite Mind, or God. This furniſhes you with a direct and immediate demonſtration, from a moſt evident principle, of the *being of a God.* Divines and philoſophers had proved, beyond all controverſy, from the beauty and uſefulneſs of the ſeveral parts of the creation, that it was the workmanſhip of God: but that, ſetting aſide all help of aſtronomy and natural-philoſophy, all contemplation of the contrivance, order, and adjuſtment, of things, an infinite mind ſhould be neceſſarily inferred from the bare exiſtence of the ſenſible world, is an advantage peculiar to them only who have made this eaſy reflection; — that the ſenſible world is that which we perceive by our ſeveral ſenſes; and that nothing is perceived by the ſenſes beſide ideas; and that no idea, or archetype of an idea, can exiſt otherwiſe than in a mind. You may now, without any laborious ſearch into the ſciences, without any ſubtilty of reaſon, or tedious length of diſcourſe, oppoſe and baffle the moſt ſtrenuous advocate for atheiſm. Thoſe miſerable refuges, whether in an eternal ſucceſſion of unthinking cauſes and effects, or in a fortuitous concourſe of atoms; thoſe wild imaginations of Vanini, Hobbes, and Spinoſa; in a word, the whole ſyſtem of atheiſm, is it not entirely overthrown by this ſingle reflexion on the repugnancy included

ded in ſuppoſing the whole, or any part, even the moſt rude and ſhapeleſs, of the viſible world, to exiſt without a mind? Let any one of thoſe abettors of impiety but look into his own thoughts, and there try if he can conceive how ſo much as a rock, a deſert, a chaos, or confuſed jumble of atoms; how any thing at all, either ſenſible or imaginable, can exiſt independent of a mind, and he need go no farther to be convinced of his folly. Can any thing be fairer than to put a diſpute on ſuch an iſſue, and leave it to a man himſelf to ſee if he can conceive, even in thought, what he holds to be true in fact, and, from a notional, to allow it a real, exiſtence?

Hyl. It cannot be denied, there is ſomething highly ſerviceable to religion in what you advance: but do you not think it looks very like a notion entertained by ſome eminent moderns, of *ſeeing all things in God?*

Phil. I would gladly know that opinion: pray, explain it to me.

Hyl. They conceive, that the ſoul, being immaterial, is incapable of being united with material things, ſo as to perceive them in themſelves, but that ſhe perceives them by her union with the ſubſtance of God, which, being ſpiritual, is therefore purely intelligible, or capable of being the immediate object of a ſpirit's thought. Beſides, the divine eſſence contains in it perfections correſpondent to each created being, and which

which are, for that reaſon, proper to exhibit or repreſent them to the mind.

PHIL. I do not underſtand how our ideas, which are things altogether paſſive and inert, can be the eſſence, or any part (or like any part) of the eſſence or ſubſtance of God, who is an impaſſive, indiviſible, purely-active, Being. Many more difficulties and objections there are, which occur, at firſt view, againſt this hypotheſis; but I ſhall only add, that it is liable to all the abſurdities of the common hypotheſes, in making a created world exiſt otherwiſe than in the mind of a ſpirit. Beſide all which, it hath this peculiar to itſelf, that it makes that material world ſerve to no purpoſe. And, if it paſs for a good argument againſt other hypotheſes in the ſciences, that they ſuppoſe nature or the divine wiſdom to make ſomething in vain, or do that, by tedious round-about methods, which might have been performed in a much more eaſy and compendious way, what ſhall we think of that hypotheſis which ſuppoſes the whole world made in vain?

HYL. But what ſay you, are not you, too, of opinion, that we ſee all things in God? If I miſtake not, what you advance comes near it.

PHIL. Few men think; yet all will have opinions: hence mens opinions are ſuperficial and confuſed. It is nothing ſtrange, that tenets, which in themſelves are ever ſo different, ſhould nevertheleſs be confounded with each other by thoſe

thoſe who do not conſider them attentively. I ſhall not, therefore, be ſurpriſed, if ſome men imagine that I run into the enthuſiaſm of Malebranche, though in truth I am very remote from it. He builds on the moſt abſtract general ideas; which I entirely diſclaim. He aſſerts an abſolute external world; which I deny. He maintains, that we are deceived by our ſenſes, and know not the real natures, or the true forms and figures, of extended beings; of all which, I hold the direct contrary: ſo that, upon the whole, there are no principles more fundamentally oppoſite than his and mine. It muſt be owned, I entirely agree with what the holy ſcripture ſaith, *that, in God, we live, and move, and have our being:* but, that we ſee things, in his eſſence, after the manner above ſet forth, I am far from believing. Take here, in brief, my meaning. It is evident that the things I perceive are my own ideas, and that no idea can exiſt unleſs it be in a mind. Nor is it leſs plain that theſe ideas or things by me perceived, either themſelves or their archetypes, exiſt independently of my mind, ſince I know myſelf not to be their author, it being out of my power to determine, at pleaſure, what particular ideas I ſhall be affected with upon opening my eyes or ears: they muſt, therefore, exiſt in ſome other mind, whoſe will it is they ſhould be exhibited to me. The things, I ſay, immediately perceived are ideas or ſenſations; call them which

you

you will: but how can any idea or ſenſation exiſt in, or be produced by, any thing but a mind or ſpirit? This indeed is inconceivable; and to aſſert that which is inconceivable is to talk nonſenſe: is it not?

HYL. Without doubt.

PHIL. But, on the other hand, it is very conceivable that they ſhould exiſt in, and be produced by, a ſpirit; ſince this is no more than I daily experience in myſelf, inaſmuch as I perceive numberleſs ideas, and by an act of my will can form a great variety of them, and raiſe them up in my imagination: though it muſt be confeſſed, theſe creatures of the fancy are not altogether ſo diſtinct, ſo ſtrong, vivid, and permanent, as thoſe perceived by my ſenſes; which latter are called, *real things*. From all which I conclude, *there is a Mind which affects me, every moment, with all the ſenſible impreſſions I perceive:* and, from the variety, order, and manner, of theſe, I conclude the Author of them to be *wiſe, powerful, and good, beyond comprehenſion*. Mark it well; I do not ſay, I ſee things by perceiving that which repreſents them in the intelligible ſubſtance of God: this I do not underſtand: but I ſay, the things by me perceived are known by the underſtanding, and produced by the will, of an infinite Spirit. And is not all this moſt plain and evident? Is there any more in it than what a little obſervation of our own minds, and that which paſſes in them,

not

not only enableth us to conceive, but alſo obligeth us to acknowledge ?

Hyl. I think I underſtand you very clearly, and own the proof you give of a deity ſeems no leſs evident than it is ſurpriſing. But, allowing that God is the ſupreme and univerſal cauſe of all things, yet may not there be ſtill a third nature beſides ſpirits and ideas ? May we not admit a ſubordinate and limited cauſe of our ideas ? In a word, may there not, for all that, be *matter?*

Phil. How often muſt I inculcate the ſame thing ? You allow the things immediately perceived by ſenſe to exiſt no where without the mind : but there is nothing perceived by ſenſe which is not perceived immediately : therefore there is nothing ſenſible that exiſts without the mind. The matter, therefore, which you ſtill inſiſt on, is ſomething intelligible, I ſuppoſe ; ſomething that may be diſcovered by reaſon, and not by ſenſe.

Hyl. You are in the right.

Phil. Pray, let me know what reaſoning your belief of matter is grounded on ; and what this matter is, in your preſent ſenſe of it.

Hyl. I find myſelf affected with various ideas, whereof I know I am not the cauſe : neither are they the cauſe of themſelves or of one another, or capable of ſubſiſting by themſelves, as being altogether inactive, fleeting, dependent, beings. They have, therefore, ſome cauſe diſtinct from

me

me and them; of which I pretend to know no more than that it is *the cauſe of my ideas*: and this thing, whatever it be, I call *matter*.

PHIL. Tell me, Hylas, hath every one a liberty to change the current proper ſignification annexed to a common name in any language? For example, ſuppoſe a traveller ſhould tell you, that, in a certain country, men might paſs unhurt through the fire; and, upon explaining himſelf, you found he meant, by the word *fire*, that which others call *water*: or if he ſhould aſſert there are trees which walk upon two legs, meaning men by the term *trees*: would you think this reaſonable?

HYL. No; I ſhould think it very abſurd. Common cuſtom is the ſtandard of propriety in language; and, for any man to affect ſpeaking improperly, is to pervert the uſe of ſpeech, and can never ſerve to a better purpoſe than to protract and multiply diſputes where there is no difference in opinion.

PHIL. And doth not *matter*, in the common current acceptation of the word, ſignify an extended, ſolid, moveable, unthinking, inactive, ſubſtance?

HYL. It doth.

PHIL. And hath it not been made evident, that no ſuch ſubſtance can poſſibly exiſt? And, though it ſhould be allowed to exiſt, yet how can that which is *inactive* be a *cauſe*? or that

which

which is *unthinking* be a *cauſe of thought?* You may, indeed, if you pleaſe, annex, to the word *matter*, a contrary meaning to what is vulgarly received; and tell me you underſtand, by it, an unextended, thinking, active, being, which is the cauſe of our ideas: but what elſe is this than to play with words, and run into that very fault you juſt now condemned with ſo much reaſon? I do by no means find fault with your reaſoning, in that you collect a cauſe from the *phænomena*; but I deny that the cauſe deducible by reaſon can properly be termed *matter*.

Hyl. There is, indeed, ſomething in what you ſay: but I am afraid you do not thoroughly comprehend my meaning. I would by no means be thought to deny that God, or an infinite Spirit, is the ſupreme cauſe of all things: all I contend for is, that, ſubordinate to the ſupreme Agent, there is a cauſe of a limited and inferior nature, which concurs in the production of our ideas, not by any act of will or ſpiritual efficiency, but by that kind of action which belongs to matter; *viz.* motion.

Phil. I find you are, at every turn, relapſing into your old exploded conceit, of a moveable and, conſequently, an extended ſubſtance, exiſting without the mind. What! have you already forgot you are convinced, or are you willing I ſhould repeat what has been ſaid on that head? In truth, this is not fair dealing in you,

ſtill

ſtill to ſuppoſe the being of that which you have ſo often acknowledged to have no being. But, not to inſiſt farther on what has been ſo largely handled, I aſk, whether all your ideas are not perfectly paſſive and inert, including nothing of action in them?

HYL. They are.

PHIL. And are ſenſible qualities any thing elſe but ideas?

HYL. How often have I acknowledged that they are not!

PHIL. But is not motion a ſenſible quality?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Conſequently it is no action.

HYL. I agree with you. And indeed it is very plain that, when I ſtir my finger, it remains paſſive: but my will, which produced the motion, is active.

PHIL. Now, I deſire to know, in the firſt place, whether (motion being allowed to be no action) you can conceive any action beſides volition: and, in the ſecond place, whether, to ſay ſomething, and conceive nothing, be not to talk nonſenſe: and, laſtly, whether, having conſidered the premiſes, you do not perceive, that, to ſuppoſe any efficient or active cauſe of our ideas, other than *ſpirit*, is highly abſurd and unreaſonable.

HYL. I give up the point entirely. But, though matter may not be a cauſe, yet what hinders

ders its being an *inſtrument* ſubſervient to the ſupreme Agent in the production of our ideas?

PHIL. An inſtrument, ſay you? pray, what may be the figure, ſprings, wheels, and motions, of that inſtrument?

HYL. Thoſe I pretend to determine nothing of, both the ſubſtance and its qualities being entirely unknown to me.

PHIL. What? you are, then, of opinion, it is made up of unknown parts, that it hath unknown motions and an unknown ſhape.

HYL. I do not believe it hath any figure or motion at all; being already convinced that no ſenſible qualities can exiſt in an unperceiving ſubſtance.

PHIL. But what notion is it poſſible to frame of an inſtrument void of all ſenſible qualities, even extenſion itſelf?

HYL. I do not pretend to have any notion of it.

PHIL. And what reaſon have you to think this unknown, this inconceivable, ſomewhat doth exiſt? Is it that you imagine God cannot act as well without it, or that you find, by experience, the uſe of ſome ſuch thing, when you form ideas in your own mind?

HYL. You are always teazing me for reaſons of my belief. Pray, what reaſons have you not to believe it?

PHIL. It is, to me, a ſufficient reaſon not to believe the exiſtence of any thing, if I ſee no rea-

ſon for believing it. But, not to inſiſt on reaſons for believing, you will not ſo much as let me know what it is you would have me believe, ſince you ſay you have no manner of notion of it. After all, let me intreat you to conſider, whether it be like a philoſopher, or even like a man of common ſenſe, to pretend to believe you know not what, and you know not why.

HYL. Hold, Philonous. When I tell you matter is an *inſtrument*, I do not mean altogether nothing. It is true, I know not the particular kind of inſtrument; but, however, I have ſome notion of *inſtrument in general*, which I apply to it.

PHIL. But what if it ſhould prove that there is ſomething, even in the moſt general notion of *inſtrument*, as taken in a diſtinct ſenſe from *cauſe*, which makes the uſe of it inconſiſtent with the divine attributes?

HYL. Make that appear, and I ſhall give up the point.

PHIL. What mean you by the general nature or notion of *inſtrument?*

HYL. That which is common to all particular inſtruments compoſeth the general notion.

PHIL. Is it not common to all inſtruments, that they are applied to the doing thoſe things only which cannot be performed by the mere act of our wills? Thus, for inſtance, I never uſe an inſtrument to move my finger, becauſe it is done by

by a volition: but I ſhould uſe one, if I were to remove part of a rock, or tear up a tree by the roots. Are you of the ſame mind? or can you ſhew any example where an inſtrument is made uſe of in producing an effect immediately depending on the will of the agent?

HYL. I own, I cannot.

PHIL. How, therefore, can you ſuppoſe, that an all-perfect Spirit, on whoſe will all things have an abſolute and immediate dependence, ſhould need an inſtrument in his operations, or, not needing it, make uſe of it? Thus, it ſeems to me that you are obliged to own the uſe of a lifeleſs inactive inſtrument to be incompatible with the infinite perfection of God; that is, by your own confeſſion, to give up the point.

HYL. It doth not readily occur what I can anſwer you.

PHIL. But methinks you ſhould be ready to own the truth, when it hath been fairly proved to you. We, indeed, who are beings of finite powers, are forced to make uſe of inſtruments; and the uſe of an inſtrument ſheweth the agent to be limited by rules of another's preſcription, and that he cannot obtain his end but in ſuch a way and by ſuch conditions. Whence it ſeems a clear conſequence, that the ſupreme unlimited Agent uſeth no tool or inſtrument at all. The will of an omnipotent Spirit is no ſooner exerted than executed, without the application of means;

which, if they are employed by inferior agents, it is not upon account of any real efficacy that is in them, or neceſſary aptitude to produce any effect, but merely in compliance with the laws of nature, or thoſe conditions preſcribed to them by the firſt Cauſe, who is himſelf above all limitation or preſcription whatſoever.

HYL. I will no longer maintain that matter is an inſtrument. However, I would not be underſtood to give up its exiſtence neither; ſince, notwithſtanding what hath been ſaid, it may ſtill be an *occaſion?*

PHIL. How many ſhapes is your matter to take? or how often muſt it be proved not to exiſt, before you are content to part with it? But, to ſay no more of this, (though, by all the laws of diſputation, I may juſtly blame you for ſo frequently changing the ſignification of the principal term,) I would fain know what you mean by affirming that matter is an occaſion, having already denied it to be a cauſe: and, when you have ſhewn in what ſenſe you underſtand *occaſion*, pray, in the next place, be pleaſed to ſhew me what reaſon induceth you to believe there is ſuch an occaſion of our ideas.

HYL. As to the firſt point; by *occaſion*, I mean an inactive unthinking being, at the preſence whereof God excites ideas in our minds.

PHIL. And what may be the nature of that inactive unthinking being?

HYL.

HYL. I know nothing of its nature.

PHIL. Proceed, then, to the ſecond point, and aſſign ſome reaſon why we ſhould allow an exiſtence to this inactive, unthinking, unknown, thing.

HYL. When we ſee ideas produced in our minds after an orderly and conſtant manner, it is natural to think they have ſome fixed and regular occaſions, at the preſence of which they are excited.

PHIL. You acknowledge, then, God alone to be the cauſe of our ideas; and that he cauſes them at the preſence of thoſe occaſions.

HYL. That is my opinion.

PHIL. Thoſe things, which you ſay are preſent to God, without doubt he perceives.

HYL. Certainly; otherwiſe they could not be, to him, an occaſion of acting.

PHIL. Not to inſiſt now on your making ſenſe of this hypotheſis, or anſwering all the puzzling queſtions and difficulties it is liable to; I only aſk, whether the order and regularity, obſervable in the ſeries of our ideas, or the courſe of nature, be not ſufficiently accounted for by the wiſdom and power of God; and whether it doth not derogate from thoſe attributes to ſuppoſe he is influenced, directed, or put in mind, when and what he is to act, by any unthinking ſubſtance; and, laſtly, whether, in caſe I granted all you contend for, it would make any thing to your purpoſe, it not being eaſy to conceive how the

external or abſolute exiſtence of an unthinking ſubſtance, diſtinct from its being perceived, can be inferred from my allowing that there are certain things perceived by the mind of God, which are, to him, the occaſion of producing ideas in us.

HYL. I am perfectly at a loſs what to think, this notion of *occaſion* ſeeming now altogether as groundleſs as the reſt.

PHIL. Do you not at length perceive, that, in all theſe different acceptations of *matter*, you have been only ſuppoſing you know not what, for no manner of reaſon, and to no kind of uſe?

HYL. I freely own myſelf leſs fond of my notions ſince they have been ſo accurately examined: but ſtill methinks I have ſome confuſed perception that there is ſuch a thing as *matter*.

PHIL. Either you perceive the being of matter immediately or mediately. If immediately, pray, inform me by which of the ſenſes you perceive it: if mediately, let me know by what reaſoning it is inferred from thoſe things which you perceive immediately. So much for the perception: then, for the matter itſelf, I aſk whether it is object, *ſubſtratum*, cauſe, inſtrument, or occaſion? You have already pleaded for each of theſe, ſhifting your notions, and making matter to appear ſometimes in one ſhape, then in another; and what you have offered hath been diſapproved and

rejected

rejected by yourſelf. If you have any thing new to advance, I would gladly hear it.

Hyl. I think I have already offered all I had to ſay on thoſe heads: I am at a loſs what more to urge.

Phil. And yet you are loath to part with your old prejudice. But, to make you quit it more eaſily, I deſire that, beſide what has been hitherto ſuggeſted, you will farther conſider whether, upon ſuppoſition that matter exiſts, you can poſſibly conceive how you ſhould be affected by it? or, ſuppoſing it did not exiſt, whether it be not evident you might, for all that, be affected with the ſame ideas you now are, and conſequently have the very ſame reaſons to believe its exiſtence that you now can have?

Hyl. I acknowledge it is poſſible we might perceive all things juſt as we do now, though there were no matter in the world; neither can I conceive, if there be matter, how it ſhould produce any idea in our minds: and I do farther grant, you have entirely ſatisfied me that it is impoſſible there ſhould be ſuch a thing as matter in any of the foregoing acceptations: but ſtill I cannot help ſuppoſing that there is *matter* in ſome ſenſe or other. What that is, I do not pretend to determine.

Phil. I do not expect you ſhould define exactly the nature of that unknown being. Only be pleaſed to tell me whether it is a ſubſtance;

and, if ſo, whether you can ſuppoſe a ſubſtance without accidents: or, in caſe you ſuppoſe it to have accidents or qualities, I deſire you will let me know what thoſe qualities are; at leaſt, what is meant by matter's ſupporting them.

HYL. We have already argued on thoſe points: I have no more to ſay to them. But, to prevent any farther queſtions, let me tell you, I at preſent underſtand, by *matter*, neither ſubſtance nor accident, thinking nor extended being, neither cauſe, inſtrument, nor occaſion; but ſomething entirely unknown, diſtinct from all theſe.

PHIL. It ſeems, then, you include, in your preſent notion of matter, nothing but the general abſtract idea of *entity*.

HYL. Nothing elſe, ſave only that I ſuperadd, to this general idea, the negation of all thoſe particular things, qualities, or ideas, that I perceive, imagine, or in any wiſe apprehend.

PHIL. Pray, where do you ſuppoſe this unknown matter to exiſt?

HYL. Oh, Philonous! now you think you have entangled me; for, if I ſay it exiſts in place, then you will infer that it exiſts in the mind, ſince it is agreed that place or extenſion exiſts only in the mind: but I am not aſhamed to own my ignorance: I know not where it exiſts; only I am ſure it exiſts not in place. There is a negative anſwer for you; and you muſt expect no other to all

all the queſtions you put, for the future, about matter.

PHIL. Since you will not tell me where it exiſts, be pleaſed to inform me after what manner you ſuppoſe it to exiſt, or what you mean by its *exiſtence*.

HYL. It neither thinks nor acts; neither perceives nor is perceived.

PHIL. But what is there poſitive in your abſtracted notion of its exiſtence?

HYL. Upon a nice obſervation, I do not find I have any poſitive notion or meaning at all. I tell you again, I am not aſhamed to own my ignorance: I know not what is meant by its *exiſtence*, or how it exiſts.

PHIL. Continue, good Hylas, to act the ſame ingenuous part, and tell me ſincerely whether you can frame a diſtinct idea of entity in general, preſcinded from, and excluſive of, all thinking and corporeal beings, all particular things whatſoever.

HYL. Hold, let me think a little. —— I profeſs, Philonous, I do not find that I can. At firſt glance methought I had ſome dilute and airy notion of pure entity in abſtract; but, upon cloſer attention, it hath quite vaniſhed out of ſight. The more I think on it, the more I am confirmed in my prudent reſolution of giving none but negative anſwers, and not pretending to the leaſt degree of any poſitive knowledge or conception of matter,

matter, its *where*, its *how*, its *entity*, or any thing belonging to it.

PHIL. When, therefore, you ſpeak of the exiſtence of matter, you have not any notion in your mind.

HYL. None at all.

PHIL. Pray, tell me if the caſe ſtands not thus: at firſt, from a belief of material ſubſtance, you would have it that the immediate objects exiſted without the mind; then that their archetypes; then cauſes; next inſtruments; then occaſions: laſtly, *ſomething in general*, which, being interpreted, proves *nothing*. So matter comes to nothing. What think you, Hylas, is not this a fair ſummary of your whole proceeding?

HYL. Be that as it will, yet I ſtill inſiſt upon it that our not being able to conceive a thing is no argument againſt its exiſtence.

PHIL. That, from a cauſe, effect, operation, ſign, or other circumſtance, there may reaſonably be inferred the exiſtence of a thing not immediately perceived, and that it were abſurd for any man to argue againſt the exiſtence of that thing from his having no direct and poſitive notion of it, I freely own. But where there is nothing of all this; where neither reaſon nor revelation induces us to believe the exiſtence of a thing; where we have not even a relative notion of it; where an abſtraction is made from perceiving and being perceived, from ſpirit and idea; laſtly, where there

there is not ſo much as the moſt inadequate or faint idea pretended to; I will not indeed thence conclude againſt the reality of any notion, or exiſtence of any thing: but my inference ſhall be, that you mean nothing at all; that you employ words to no manner of purpoſe, without any deſign or ſignification whatſoever: and I leave it to you to conſider how mere jargon ſhould be treated.

HYL. To deal frankly with you, Philonous, your arguments ſeem in themſelves unanſwerable; but they have not ſo great an effect on me as to produce that entire conviction, that hearty acquieſcence, which attends demonſtration. I find myſelf ſtill relapſing into an obſcure ſurmiſe of I know not what, *matter*.

PHIL. But are you not ſenſible, Hylas, that two things muſt concur, to take away all ſcruple, and work a plenary aſſent in the mind? Let a viſible object be ſet in never ſo clear a light, yet, if there is any imperfection in the ſight, or if the eye is not directed towards it, it will not be diſtinctly ſeen. And though a demonſtration be never ſo well grounded and fairly propoſed, yet, if there is withal a ſtain of prejudice, or a wrong bias on the underſtanding, can it be expected on a ſudden to perceive clearly and adhere firmly to the truth? No; there is need of time and pains: the attention muſt be awakened and detained by a frequent repetition of the ſame thing, placed oft in the ſame, oft in different, lights. I have ſaid

it already, and find I muſt ſtill repeat and inculcate, that it is an unaccountable licence you take, in pretending to maintain you know not what, for you know not what reaſon, to you know not what purpoſe. Can this be parallelled in any art or ſcience, any ſect or profeſſion of men? or is there any thing ſo barefacedly groundleſs and unreaſonable to be met with even in the loweſt of common converſation? But perhaps you will ſtill ſay, matter may exiſt, though at the ſame time you neither know what is meant by *matter*, or by its *exiſtence*. This indeed is ſurpriſing; and the more ſo becauſe it is altogether voluntary, you not being led to it by any one reaſon; for I challenge you to ſhew me that thing in nature which needs matter to explain or account for it.

HYL. The reality of things cannot be maintained without ſuppoſing the exiſtence of matter: and is not this, think you, a good reaſon why I ſhould be earneſt in its defence?

PHIL. The reality of things! What things; ſenſible or intelligible?

HYL. Senſible things.

PHIL. My glove, for example.

HYL. That or any other thing perceived by the ſenſes.

PHIL. But, to fix on ſome particular thing; is it not a ſufficient evidence, to me, of the exiſtence of this *glove*, that I ſee it, and feel it, and wear it? Or, if this will not do, how is it poſ-

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ſible I ſhould be aſſured of the reality of this thing, which I actually ſee in this place, by ſuppoſing that ſome unknown thing, which I never did or can ſee, exiſts after an unknown manner, in an unknown place, or in no place at all? How can the ſuppoſed reality of that which is intangible be a proof that any thing tangible really exiſts? or of that which is inviſible, that any viſible thing? or, in general, of any thing which is imperceptible, that a perceptible exiſts? Do but explain this, and I ſhall think nothing too hard for you.

HYL. Upon the whole, I am content to own the exiſtence of matter is highly improbable; but the direct and abſolute impoſſibility of it does not appear to me.

PHIL. But, granting matter to be poſſible, yet, upon that account merely, it can have no more claim to exiſtence than a golden mountain or a centaur.

HYL. I acknowledge it. But ſtill you do not deny it is poſſible; and that which is poſſible, for aught you know, may actually exiſt.

PHIL. I deny it to be poſſible; and have, if I miſtake not, evidently proved, from your own conceſſions, that it is not. In the common ſenſe of the word, *matter*, is there any more implied than an extended, ſolid, figured, moveable, ſubſtance, exiſting without the mind? and have not you acknowledged, over and over, that you have

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ſeen evident reaſon for denying the poſſibility of ſuch a ſubſtance?

HYL. True: but that is only one ſenſe of the term, *matter*.

PHIL. But is it not the only proper genuine received ſenſe? And, if matter, in ſuch a ſenſe, be proved impoſſible, may it not be thought, with good grounds, abſolutely impoſſible? elſe how could any thing be proved impoſſible? or, indeed, how could there be any proof at all, one way or other, to a man who takes the liberty to unſettle and change the common ſignification of words?

HYL. I thought philoſophers might be allowed to ſpeak more accurately than the vulgar, and were not always confined to the common acceptation of a term.

PHIL. But this now mentioned is the common received ſenſe among philoſophers themſelves. But, not to inſiſt on that, have you not been allowed to take matter in what ſenſe you pleaſed? and have you not uſed this privilege in the utmoſt extent; ſometimes entirely changing; at others, leaving out, or putting into the definition of it, whatever, for the preſent, beſt ſerved your deſign, contrary to all the known rules of reaſon and logic? and hath not this ſhifting unfair method of yours ſpun out our diſpute to an unneceſſary length, matter having been particularly examined, and, by your own confeſſion, refuted,

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in each of thoſe ſenſes? and can any more be required, to prove the abſolute impoſſibility of a thing, than the proving it impoſſible in every particular ſenſe that either you or any one elſe underſtands it in?

HYL. But I am not ſo thoroughly ſatisfied that you have proved the impoſſibility of matter in the laſt moſt obſcure abſtracted and indefinite ſenſe.

PHIL. When is a thing ſhewn to be impoſſible?

HYL. When a repugnancy is demonſtrated between the ideas comprehended in its definition.

PHIL. But, where there are no ideas, there no repugnancy can be demonſtrated between ideas.

HYL. I agree with you.

PHIL. Now, in that which you call the obſcure indefinite ſenſe of the word, *matter*, it is plain, by your own confeſſion, there was included no idea at all, no ſenſe except an unknown ſenſe, which is the ſame thing as none. You are not, therefore, to expect I ſhould prove a repugnancy between ideas where there are no ideas, or the impoſſibility of matter, taken in an *unknown* ſenſe, that is no ſenſe at all. My buſineſs was only to ſhew you meant *nothing*; and this you were brought to own. So that, in all your various ſenſes, you have been ſhewed either to mean nothing at all, or, if any thing, an abſurdity; and, if this be not ſufficient to prove the impoſſibility of a thing, I deſire you will let me know what is.

HYL.

HYL. I acknowledge you have proved that matter is impoſſible; nor do I ſee what more can be ſaid in defence of it. But, at the ſame time that I give up this, I ſuſpect all my other notions; for ſurely none could be more ſeemingly evident than this once was; and yet it now ſeems as falſe and abſurd as ever it did true before. But I think we have diſcuſſed the point ſufficiently for the preſent. The remaining part of the day I would willingly ſpend in running over, in my thoughts, the ſeveral heads of this morning's converſation; and, to-morrow, ſhall be glad to meet you here again about the ſame time.

PHIL. I will not fail to attend you.

THE THIRD DIALOGUE.

PHILONOUS.

TELL me, Hylas, what are the fruits of yeſterday's meditation? hath it confirmed you in the ſame mind you were in at parting? or have you ſince ſeen cauſe to change your opinion?

HYL. Truly my opinion is, that all our opinions are alike vain and uncertain. What we approve to-day we condemn to-morrow. We keep a ſtir about knowledge, and ſpend our lives in the purſuit of it, when, alas! we know nothing all the while; nor do I think it poſſible for us ever to know any thing in this life. Our faculties are too narrow and too few. Nature certainly never intended us for ſpeculation.

PHIL. What! ſay you we can know nothing, Hylas?

HYL. There is not that ſingle thing in the world whereof we can know the real nature, or what it is in itſelf.

PHIL. Will you tell me I do not really know what fire or water is?

HYL. You may, indeed, know that fire appears hot, and water fluid: but this is no more than knowing what ſenſations are produced in your own mind, upon the application of fire and water to your organs of ſenſe. Their internal conſtitution, their true and real nature, you are utterly in the dark as to *that*.

PHIL. Do I not know this to be a real ſtone that I ſtand on, and that which I ſee before my eyes to be a real tree?

HYL. *Know?* No; it is impoſſible you or any man alive ſhould know it. All you know is, that you have ſuch a certain idea or appearance in your own mind: but what is this to the real tree or ſtone? I tell you, that colour, figure, and hardneſs, which you perceive, are not the real natures of thoſe things, or in the leaſt like them. The ſame may be ſaid of all other real things, or corporeal ſubſtances, which compoſe the world. They have none of them any thing in themſelves like thoſe ſenſible qualities by us perceived. We ſhould not, therefore, pretend to affirm or know any thing of them as they are in their own nature.

PHIL. But ſurely, Hylas, I can diſtinguiſh gold, for example, from iron; and how could this be if I knew not what either truly was?

HYL.

HYL. Believe me, Philonous, you can only diſtinguiſh between your own ideas. That yellowneſs, that weight, and other ſenſible qualities, think you they are really in the gold? They are only relative to the ſenſes, and have no abſolute exiſtence in nature: and, in pretending to diſtinguiſh the ſpecies of real things by the appearances in your mind, you may perhaps act as wiſely as he that ſhould conclude two men were of a different ſpecies becauſe their cloaths were not of the ſame colour.

PHIL. It ſeems, then, we are altogether put off with the appearances of things, and thoſe falſe ones too. The very meat I eat, and the cloth I wear, have nothing in them like what I ſee and feel.

HYL. Even ſo.

PHIL. But is it not ſtrange the whole world ſhould be thus impoſed on, and ſo fooliſh as to believe their ſenſes? And yet I know not how it is, but men eat, and drink, and ſleep, and perform all the offices of life, as comfortably and conveniently as if they really knew the things they are converſant about.

HYL. They do ſo: but you know ordinary practice does not require a nicety of ſpeculative knowledge. Hence the vulgar retain their miſtakes, and, for all that, make a ſhift to buſtle through the affairs of life: but philoſophers know better things.

PHIL. You mean, they know that they *know nothing*.

HYL. That is the very top and perfection of human knowledge.

PHIL. But are you all this while in earneſt, Hylas? and are you ſeriouſly perſuaded that you know nothing real in the world? Suppoſe you are going to write, would you not call for pen, ink, and paper, like another man? and do you not know what it is you call for?

HYL. How often muſt I tell you that I know not the real nature of any one thing in the univerſe? I may indeed, upon occaſion, make uſe of pen, ink, and paper: but what any one of them is, in its own true nature, I declare poſitively I know not: and the ſame is true with regard to every other corporeal thing. And, what is more, we are not only ignorant of the true and real nature of things, but even of their exiſtence. It cannot be denied that we perceive ſuch certain appearances or ideas; but it cannot be concluded, from thence, that bodies really exiſt. Nay, now I think on it, I muſt, agreeably to my former conceſſions, farther declare, that it is impoſſible any real corporeal thing ſhould exiſt in nature.

PHIL. You amaze me. Was ever any thing more wild and extravagant than the notions you now maintain? and is it not evident you are led into all theſe extravagancies by the belief of *material ſubſtance?* This makes you dream of thoſe unknown

unknown natures in every thing. It is this occaſions your diſtinguiſhing between the reality and ſenſible appearances of things. It is to this you are indebted for being ignorant of what every body elſe knows perfectly well. Nor is this all: you are not only ignorant of the true nature of every thing, but you know not whether any thing really exiſts, or whether there are any true natures at all; foraſmuch as you attribute to your material beings an abſolute or external exiſtence, wherein you ſuppoſe their reality conſiſts: and, as you are forced, in the end, to acknowledge ſuch an exiſtence means either a direct repugnancy, or nothing at all, it follows that you are obliged to pull down your own hypotheſis of material ſubſtance, and poſitively to deny the real exiſtence of any part of the univerſe; and ſo you are plunged into the deepeſt and moſt deplorable *ſcepticiſm* that ever man was. Tell me, Hylas, is it not as I ſay?

Hyl. I agree with you. *Material ſubſtance* was no more than an hypotheſis, and a falſe and groundleſs one too: I will no longer ſpend my breath in defence of it. But, whatever hypotheſis you advance, or whatever ſcheme of things you introduce in its ſtead, I doubt not it will appear every whit as falſe. Let me but be allowed to queſtion you upon it; that is, ſuffer me to ſerve you in your own kind, and I warrant it ſhall conduct you, through as many perplexities and

contradictions, to the very ſame ſtate of ſcepticiſm that I myſelf am in at preſent.

PHIL. I aſſure you, Hylas, I do not pretend to frame any hypotheſis at all. I am of a vulgar caſt, ſimple enough to believe my ſenſes and leave things as I find them. To be plain, it is my opinion that the real things are thoſe very things I ſee, and feel, and perceive by my ſenſes. Theſe I know; and, finding they anſwer all the neceſſities and purpoſes of life, have no reaſon to be ſolicitous about any other unknown beings. A piece of ſenſible bread, for inſtance, would ſtay my ſtomach better than ten thouſand times as much of that inſenſible, unintelligible, real, bread you ſpeak of. It is likewiſe my opinion that colours and other ſenſible qualities are on the objects. I cannot for my life help thinking that ſnow is white, and fire hot. You, indeed, who, by *ſnow* and *fire*, mean certain external, unperceived, unperceiving, ſubſtances, are in the right to deny whiteneſs or heat to be affections inherent in them: but I, who underſtand, by thoſe words, the things I ſee and feel, am obliged to think like other folks; and, as I am no ſceptic with regard to the nature of things, ſo neither am I as to their exiſtence. That a thing ſhould be really perceived by my ſenſes, and at the ſame time not really exiſt, is to me a plain contradiction; ſince I cannot preſcind or abſtract, even in thought, the exiſtence of a ſenſible thing from its

its being perceived. Wood, ſtones, fire, water, fleſh, iron, and the like things, which I name and diſcourſe of, are things that I know; and I ſhould not have known them but that I perceived them by my ſenſes; and things perceived by the ſenſes are immediately perceived; and things immediately perceived are ideas; and ideas cannot exiſt without the mind; their exiſtence, therefore, conſiſts in being perceived: when, therefore, they are actually perceived, there can be no doubt of their exiſtence. Away, then, with all that ſcepticiſm, all thoſe ridiculous philoſophical doubts. What a jeſt is it for a philoſopher to queſtion the exiſtence of ſenſible things, till he hath it proved to him from the veracity of God; or to pretend our knowledge, in this point, falls ſhort of intuition or demonſtration! I might as well doubt of my own being as of the being of thoſe things I actually ſee and feel.

HYL. Not ſo faſt, Philonous. You ſay you cannot conceive how ſenſible things ſhould exiſt without the mind; do you not?

PHIL. I do.

HYL. Suppoſing you were annihilated, cannot you conceive it poſſible that things perceivable by ſenſe may ſtill exiſt?

PHIL. I can; but then it muſt be in another mind. When I deny ſenſible things an exiſtence out of the mind, I do not mean my mind in particular, but all minds. Now, it is plain they

have an exiſtence exterior to my mind, ſince I find them by experience to be independent of it. There is, therefore, ſome other mind wherein they exiſt during the intervals between the times of my perceiving them; as likewiſe they did before my birth, and would do after my ſuppoſed annihilation: and, as the ſame is true with regard to all other finite created ſpirits, it neceſſarily follows there is an *omnipreſent eternal Mind*, which knows and comprehends all things, and exhibits them to our view in ſuch a manner, and according to ſuch rules, as he himſelf hath ordained, and are by us termed the *laws of nature*.

HYL. Anſwer me, Philonous: are all our ideas perfectly inert beings? or have they any agency included in them?

PHIL. They are altogether paſſive and inert.

HYL. And is not God an agent, a being purely active?

PHIL. I acknowledge it.

HYL. No idea, therefore, can be like unto, or repreſent, the nature of God.

PHIL. It cannot.

HYL. Since, therefore, you have no idea of the mind of God, how can you conceive it poſſible that things ſhould exiſt in his mind? Or, if you can conceive the mind of God without having an idea of it, why may not I be allowed to conceive the exiſtence of matter, notwithſtanding that I have no idea of it?

PHIL.

PHIL. As to your firſt queſtion, I own I have properly no idea either of God or any other ſpirit; for theſe, being active, cannot be repreſented by things perfectly inert, as our ideas are. I do nevertheleſs know, that I, who am a ſpirit or thinking ſubſtance, exiſt as certainly as I know my ideas exiſt. Farther, I know what I mean by the terms, *I* and *myſelf*; and I know this immediately, or intuitively, though I do not perceive it as I perceive a triangle, a colour, or a ſound. The mind, ſpirit, or ſoul, is that indiviſible unextended thing, which thinks, acts, and perceives. I ſay *indiviſible*, becauſe unextended; and *unextended*, becauſe extended, figured, moveable things are ideas; and that which perceives ideas, which thinks, and wills, is plainly itſelf no idea, nor like an idea. Ideas are things inactive and perceived; and ſpirits a ſort of beings altogether different from them: I do not, therefore, ſay, my ſoul is an idea, or like an idea. However, taking the word, *idea*, in a large ſenſe, my ſoul may be ſaid to furniſh me with an idea, that is, an image or likeneſs, of God, though indeed extremely inadequate; for all the notion I have of God is obtained by reflecting on my own ſoul, heightening its powers, and removing its imperfections. I have, therefore, though not an inactive idea, yet, in myſelf, ſome ſort of an active thinking image of the Deity; and, though I perceive him not by ſenſe, yet I have a notion

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of him, or know him, by reflexion and reaſoning. My own mind, and my own ideas, I have an immediate knowledge of; and, by the help of theſe, do mediately apprehend the poſſibility of the exiſtence of other ſpirits and ideas. Farther, from my own being, and from the dependency I find in myſelf and my ideas, I do, by an act of reaſon, neceſſarily infer the exiſtence of a God, and of all created things in the mind of God. So much for your firſt queſtion. For the ſecond, I ſuppoſe, by this time, you can anſwer it yourſelf: for you neither perceive matter objectively, as you do an inactive being or idea; nor know it, as you do yourſelf, by a reflex act; neither do you mediately apprehend it by ſimilitude of the one or the other, nor yet collect it by reaſoning from that which you know immediately: all which makes the caſe of *matter* widely different from that of the *Deity*.

Hyl. You ſay your own ſoul ſupplies you with ſome ſort of an idea or image of God; but, at the ſame time, you acknowledge you have, properly ſpeaking, no idea of your own ſoul. You even affirm that ſpirits are a ſort of beings altogether different from ideas; conſequently, that no idea can be like a ſpirit: we have, therefore, no idea of any ſpirit. You admit, nevertheleſs, that there is ſpiritual ſubſtance, although you have no idea of it; while you deny there can be ſuch a thing as material ſubſtance, becauſe

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you have no notion or idea of it. Is this fair dealing? To act conſiſtently, you muſt either admit matter, or reject ſpirit. What ſay you to this?

PHIL. I ſay, in the firſt place, that I do not deny the exiſtence of material ſubſtance merely becauſe I have no notion of it, but becauſe the notion of it is inconſiſtent; or, in other words, becauſe it is repugnant that there ſhould be a notion of it. Many things, for aught I know, may exiſt, whereof neither I nor any other man hath, or can have, any idea or notion whatſoever. But then thoſe things muſt be poſſible; that is, nothing inconſiſtent muſt be included in their definition. I ſay, ſecondly, that, although we believe things to exiſt which we do not perceive, yet we may not believe that any particular thing exiſts, without ſome reaſon for ſuch belief. But I have no reaſon for believing the exiſtence of matter: I have no immediate intuition thereof; neither can I, mediately, from my ſenſations, ideas, notions, actions, or paſſions, infer an unthinking, unperceiving, inactive, ſubſtance, either by probable deduction or neceſſary conſequence: whereas, the being of myſelf, that is, my own ſoul, mind, or thinking principle, I evidently know by reflexion. You will forgive me if I repeat the ſame things in anſwer to the ſame objections. In the very notion or definition of material ſubſtance there is included a manifeſt repugnance

pugnance and inconſiſtency: but this cannot be ſaid of the notion of ſpirit. That ideas ſhould exiſt in what doth not perceive, or be produced by what doth not act, is repugnant: but it is no repugnancy to ſay that a perceiving thing ſhould be the ſubject of ideas, or an active thing the cauſe of them. It is granted we have neither an immediate evidence, nor a demonſtrative knowledge, of the exiſtence of other finite ſpirits; but it will not thence follow that ſuch ſpirits are on a foot with material ſubſtances; if to ſuppoſe the one be inconſiſtent, and it be not inconſiſtent to ſuppoſe the other; if the one can be inferred by no argument, and there is a probability for the other; if we ſee ſigns and effects indicating diſtinct finite agents like ourſelves, and ſee no ſign or ſymptom whatever that leads to a rational belief of matter. I ſay, laſtly, that I have a notion of ſpirit, though I have not, ſtrictly ſpeaking, an idea of it. I do not perceive it as an idea, or by means of an idea; but know it by reflexion.

HYL. Notwithſtanding all you have ſaid, to me it ſeems that, according to your own way of thinking, and in conſequence of your own principles, it ſhould follow that you are only a ſyſtem of floating ideas, without any ſubſtance to ſupport them. Words are not to be uſed without a meaning; and, as there is no more meaning in ſpiritual ſubſtance than in material ſubſtance, the one is to be exploded as well as the other.

PHIL.

PHIL. How often muſt I repeat, that I know or am conſcious of my own being; and that I myſelf am not my ideas, but ſomewhat elſe, — a thinking active principle, that perceives, knows, wills, and operates about ideas? I know that I, one and the ſame ſelf, perceive both colours and ſounds: that a colour cannot perceive a ſound, nor a ſound a colour: that I am therefore one individual principle, diſtinct from colour and ſound; and, for the ſame reaſon, from all other ſenſible things and inert ideas. But I am not in like manner conſcious either of the exiſtence or eſſence of matter. On the contrary, I know that nothing inconſiſtent can exiſt, and that the exiſtence of matter implies an inconſiſtency. Farther, I know what I mean, when I affirm that there is a ſpiritual ſubſtance or ſupport of ideas; that is, that a ſpirit knows and perceives ideas: but I do not know what is meant when it is ſaid that an unperceiving ſubſtance hath inherent in it, and ſupports, either ideas or the archetypes of ideas. There is, therefore, upon the whole, no parity of caſe between ſpirit and matter.

HYL. I own myſelf ſatisfied in this point. But do you in earneſt think the real exiſtence of ſenſible things conſiſts in their being actually perceived? If ſo, how comes it that all mankind diſtinguiſh between them? Aſk the firſt man you meet, and he ſhall tell you, *to be perceived* is one thing, and *to exiſt* is another.

PHIL.

PHIL. I am content, Hylas, to appeal to the common ſenſe of the world for the truth of my notion. Aſk the gardener why he thinks yonder cherry-tree exiſts in the garden, and he ſhall tell you, becauſe he ſees and feels it; in a word, becauſe he perceives it by his ſenſes. Aſk him why he thinks an orange-tree not to be there, and he ſhall tell you, becauſe he does not perceive it. What he perceives by ſenſe, that he terms a real being, and ſaith, it *is*, or *exiſts*; but that which is not perceivable, the ſame, he ſaith, hath no being.

HYL. Yes, Philonous, I grant the exiſtence of a ſenſible thing conſiſts in being perceivable; but not in being actually perceived.

PHIL. And what is perceivable but an idea? and can an idea exiſt without being actually perceived? Theſe are points long ſince agreed between us.

HYL. But, be your opinion never ſo true, yet ſurely you will not deny it is ſhocking and contrary to the common ſenſe of men. Aſk the fellow whether yonder tree hath an exiſtence out of his mind; what anſwer think you he would make?

PHIL. The ſame that I ſhould myſelf; to wit, that it doth exiſt out of his mind. But then, to a Chriſtian, it cannot ſurely be ſhocking to ſay, the real tree exiſting without his mind is truly known and comprehended by (that is, *exiſts in*) the

the infinite mind of God. Probably he may not, at firſt glance, be aware of the direct and immediate proof there is of this, inaſmuch as the very being of a tree, or any other ſenſible thing, implies a mind wherein it is: but the point itſelf he cannot deny. The queſtion between the materialiſts and me is not whether things have a real exiſtence out of the mind of this or that perſon, but whether they have an abſolute exiſtence, diſtinct from being perceived by God, and exterior to all minds. This, indeed, ſome heathens and philoſophers have affirmed; but whoever entertains notions of the Deity ſuitable to the holy ſcriptures will be of another opinion.

Hyl. But, according to your notions, what difference is there between real things and chimeras formed by the imagination, or the viſions of a dream, ſince they are all equally in the mind?

Phil. The ideas formed by the imagination are faint and indiſtinct; they have, beſides, an entire dependence on the will: but the ideas perceived by ſenſe, that is, real things, are more vivid and clear; and, being imprinted on the mind by a ſpirit diſtinct from us, have not a like dependence on our will. There is, therefore, no danger of confounding theſe with the foregoing; and there is as little of confounding them with the viſions of a dream, which are dim, irregular, and confuſed: and, though they ſhould

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happen to be never ſo lively and natural, yet, by their not being connected and of a piece with the preceding and ſubſequent tranſactions of our lives, they might eaſily be diſtinguiſhed from realities. In ſhort, by whatever method you diſtinguiſh *things* from *chimeras* on your own ſcheme, the ſame, it is evident, will hold alſo upon mine: for it muſt be, I preſume, by ſome perceived difference; and I am not for depriving you of any one thing that you perceive.

HYL. But ſtill, Philonous, you hold there is nothing in the world but ſpirits and ideas; and this, you muſt needs acknowledge, ſounds very oddly.

PHIL. I own the word, *idea*, not being commonly uſed for *thing*, ſounds ſomething out of the way. My reaſon for uſing it was, becauſe a neceſſary relation to the mind is underſtood to be implied by that term, and it is now commonly uſed by philoſophers to denote the immediate objects of the underſtanding. But, however oddly the propoſition may ſound in words, yet it includes nothing ſo very ſtrange or ſhocking in its ſenſe; which in effect amounts to no more than this, to wit, that there are only things perceiving and things perceived; or that every unthinking being is, neceſſarily, and from the very nature of its exiſtence, perceived by ſome mind; if not by any finite created mind, yet certainly by the infinite mind of God, in whom *we live, and move, and*

and have our being. Is this as ſtrange as to ſay, the ſenſible qualities are not on the objects; or, that we cannot be ſure of the exiſtence of things, or know any thing of their real natures, though we both ſee and feel them, and perceive them by all our ſenſes?

HYL. And, in conſequence of this, muſt we not think there are no ſuch things as phyſical or corporeal cauſes; but that a ſpirit is the immediate cauſe of all the *phænomena* in nature? Can there be any thing more extravagant than this?

PHIL. Yes, it is infinitely more extravagant to ſay, a thing which is inert operates on the mind, and which is unperceiving is the cauſe of our perceptions. Beſides, that which to you (I know not for what reaſon) ſeems ſo extravagant is no more than the holy ſcriptures aſſert in a hundred places. In them God is repreſented as the ſole and immediate author of all thoſe effects which ſome heathens and philoſophers are wont to aſcribe to nature, matter, fate, or the like unthinking principle. This is ſo much the conſtant language of ſcripture, that it were needleſs to confirm it by citations.

HYL. You are not aware, Philonous, that, in making God the immediate author of all the motions in nature, you make him the author of murder, ſacrilege, adultery, and the like heinous ſins.

PHIL. In anſwer to that, I obſerve, firſt, that the imputation of guilt is the ſame, whether a

perſon commits an action with or without an inſtrument. In caſe, therefore, you ſuppoſe God to act by the mediation of an inſtrument or occaſion, called *matter*, you as truly make him the author of ſin as I, who think him the immediate agent in all thoſe operations vulgarly aſcribed to nature. I farther obſerve, that ſin, or moral turpitude, doth not conſiſt in the outward phyſical action or motion, but in the internal deviation of the will from the laws of reaſon and religion. This is plain, in that the killing an enemy in a battle, or putting a criminal legally to death, is not thought ſinful, though the outward act be the very ſame with that in the caſe of murder. Since, therefore, ſin doth not conſiſt in the phyſical action, the making God an immediate cauſe of all ſuch actions is not making him the author of ſin. Laſtly, I have no where ſaid that God is the only agent who produces all the motions in bodies. It is true, I have denied there are any other agents beſide ſpirits; but this is very conſiſtent with allowing to thinking rational beings, in the production of motions, the uſe of limited powers, ultimately indeed derived from God, but immediately under the direction of their own wills, which is ſufficient to entitle them to all the guilt of their actions.

Hyl. But, the denying matter, Philonous, or corporeal ſubſtance, — there is the point. You can never perſuade me that this is not repugnant

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to the univerſal ſenſe of mankind. Were our diſpute to be determined by moſt voices, I am confident you would give up the point, without gathering the votes.

PHIL. I wiſh both our opinions were fairly ſtated and ſubmitted to the judgement of men who had plain common ſenſe, without the prejudices of a learned education. Let me be repreſented as one who truſts his ſenſes, who thinks he knows the things he ſees and feels, and entertains no doubts of their exiſtence; and you fairly ſet forth with all your doubts, your paradoxes, and your ſcepticiſm, about you, and I ſhall willingly acquieſce in the determination of any indifferent perſon. That there is no ſubſtance, wherein ideas can exiſt, beſide ſpirit, is to me evident; and that the objects immediately perceived are ideas, is on all hands agreed; and that ſenſible qualities are objects immediately perceived, no one can deny: it is therefore evident there can be no *ſubſtratum* of thoſe qualities but ſpirit, in which they exiſt, not by way of mode or property, but as a thing perceived in that which perceives it. I deny, therefore, that there is any unthinking *ſubſtratum* of the objects of ſenſe; and, in that acceptation, that there is any material ſubſtance. But if, by *material ſubſtance*, is meant only ſenſible body, that which is ſeen and felt, (and the unphiloſophical part of the world, I dare ſay, mean no more,) then I am more cer-

tain of matter's exiſtence than you, or any other philoſopher, pretend to be. If there be any thing which makes the generality of mankind averſe from the notions I eſpouſe, it is a miſapprehenſion that I deny the reality of ſenſible things: but, as it is you who are guilty of that; and not I, it follows, that, in truth, their averſion is againſt your notions, and not mine. I do, therefore, aſſert, that I am as certain, as of my own being, that there are bodies or corporeal ſubſtances, (meaning the things I perceive by my ſenſes,) and that, granting this, the bulk of mankind will take no thought about, nor think themſelves at all concerned in, the fate of thoſe unknown natures and philoſophical quiddities which ſome men are ſo fond of.

Hyl. What ſay you to this? Since, according to you, men judge of the reality of things by their ſenſes, how can a man be miſtaken in thinking the moon a plain lucid ſurface, about a foot in diameter; or a ſquare tower, ſeen at a diſtance, round; or an oar, with one end in the water, crooked?

Phil. He is not miſtaken with regard to the ideas he actually perceives; but in the inferences he makes from his preſent perceptions. Thus, in the caſe of the oar, what he immediately perceives by ſight is certainly crooked; and ſo far he is in the right: but, if he thence conclude, that, upon taking the oar out of the water, he

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ſhall perceive the ſame crookedneſs, or that it would affect his touch as crooked things are wont to do, — in that he is miſtaken. In like manner, if he ſhall conclude, from what he perceives in one ſtation, that, in caſe he advances toward the moon or tower, he ſhould ſtill be affected with the like ideas, he is miſtaken. But his miſtake lies not in what he perceives immediately and at preſent, (it being a manifeſt contradiction to ſuppoſe he ſhould err in reſpect of that,) but in the wrong judgement he makes concerning the ideas he apprehends to be connected with thoſe immediately perceived, or concerning the ideas that, from what he perceives at preſent, he imagines would be perceived in other circumſtances. The caſe is the ſame with regard to the Copernican ſyſtem. We do not here perceive any motion of the earth; but it were erroneous thence to conclude, that, in caſe we were placed at as great a diſtance from that as we are now from the other planets, we ſhould not then perceive its motion.

Hyl. I underſtand you, and muſt needs own you ſay things plauſible enough: but give me leave to put you in mind of one thing. Pray, Philonous, were you not formerly as poſitive that matter exiſted, as you are now that it does not?

Phil. I was. But here lies the difference: before, my poſitiveneſs was founded, without examination, upon prejudice; but now, after inquiry, upon evidence.

HYL. After all, it ſeems our diſpute is rather about words than things: we agree in the thing, but differ in the name. That we are affected with ideas from without, is evident; and it is no leſs evident that there muſt be (I will not ſay archetypes, but) powers without the mind, correſponding to thoſe ideas: and, as theſe powers cannot ſubſiſt by themſelves, there is ſome ſubject of them neceſſarily to be admitted, which I call *matter*, and you call *ſpirit*. This is all the difference.

PHIL. Pray, Hylas, is that powerful being, or ſubject of powers, extended?

HYL. It hath not extenſion; but it hath the power to raiſe in you the idea of extenſion.

PHIL. It is, therefore, itſelf unextended.

HYL. I grant it.

PHIL. Is it not alſo active?

HYL. Without doubt: otherwiſe, how could we attribute powers to it?

PHIL. Now, let me aſk you two queſtions: firſt, whether it be agreeable to the uſage, either of philoſophers or others, to give the name, *matter*, to an unextended active being? and, ſecondly, whether it be not ridiculouſly abſurd to miſapply names contrary to the common uſe of language?

HYL. Well, then, let it not be called *matter*, ſince you will have it ſo, but ſome *third nature*, diſtinct from matter and ſpirit: for, what reaſon

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is there why you ſhould call it *ſpirit*? Does not the notion of ſpirit imply that it is thinking, as well as active and unextended?

PHIL. My reaſon is this; becauſe I have a mind to have ſome notion or meaning in what I ſay: but I have no notion of any action diſtinct from volition; neither can I conceive volition to be any where but in a ſpirit: therefore, when I ſpeak of an active being, I am obliged to mean a ſpirit. Beſide, what can be plainer than that a thing, which hath no ideas in itſelf, cannot impart them to me? and, if it hath ideas, ſurely it muſt be a ſpirit. To make you comprehend the point ſtill more clearly, if it be poſſible; I aſſert, as well as you, that, ſince we are affected from without, we muſt allow powers to be without, in a being diſtinct from ourſelves. So far we are agreed. But then we differ as to the kind of this powerful being. I will have it to be ſpirit; you, matter, or I know not what (I may add, too, you know not what) third nature. Thus I prove it to be ſpirit: from the effects I ſee produced, I conclude there are actions; and, becauſe actions, volitions; and, becauſe there are volitions, there muſt be a will. Again; the things I perceive muſt have an exiſtence, they or their archetypes, out of my mind; but, being ideas, neither they nor their archetypes can exiſt otherwiſe than in an underſtanding: there is, therefore, an underſtanding. But will and underſtanding conſtitute, in

the ſtricteſt ſenſe, a mind or ſpirit: the powerful cauſe, therefore, of my ideas is, in ſtrict propriety of ſpeech, a *ſpirit*.

HYL. And now, I warrant, you think you have made the point very clear; little ſuſpecting that what you advance leads directly to a contradiction. Is it not an abſurdity to imagine any imperfection in God?

PHIL. Without doubt.

HYL. To ſuffer pain is an imperfection.

PHIL. It is.

HYL. Are we not ſometimes affected with pain and uneaſineſs by ſome other being?

PHIL. We are.

HYL. And have you not ſaid, that being is a ſpirit? and is not that ſpirit God?

PHIL. I grant it.

HYL. But you have aſſerted, that whatever ideas we perceive from without are in the mind which affects us. The ideas, therefore, of pain and uneaſineſs are in God; or, in other words, God ſuffers pain: that is to ſay, there is an imperfection in the divine nature; which you acknowledged was abſurd. So you are caught in a plain contradiction.

PHIL. That God knows or underſtands all things, and that he knows, among other things, what pain is, (even every ſort of painful ſenſation,) and what it is for his creatures to ſuffer pain, I make no queſtion: but that God, though

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he knows, and ſometimes cauſes, painful ſenſations in us, can himſelf ſuffer pain, I poſitively deny. We, who are limited and dependent ſpirits, are liable to impreſſions of ſenſe, the effects of an external agent, which, being produced againſt our wills, are ſometimes painful and uneaſy: but God, whom no external being can affect; who perceives nothing by ſenſe, as we do; whoſe will is abſolute and independent, cauſing all things, and liable to be thwarted or reſiſted by nothing; — it is evident ſuch a Being as this can ſuffer nothing, nor be affected with any painful ſenſation, or indeed any ſenſation at all. We are chained to a body; that is to ſay, our perceptions are connected with corporeal motions. By the law of our nature we are affected upon every alteration in the nervous parts of our ſenſible body; which ſenſible body, rightly conſidered, is nothing but a complexion of ſuch qualities or ideas as have no exiſtence diſtinct from being perceived by a mind: ſo that this connexion of ſenſations with corporeal motions means no more than a correſpondence, in the order of nature, between two ſets of ideas or things immediately perceivable. But God is a pure ſpirit, diſengaged from all ſuch ſympathy or natural ties: no corporeal motions are attended with the ſenſations of pain or pleaſure in his mind. To know every thing knowable is certainly a perfection; but to endure, or ſuffer, or feel any thing by ſenſe, is

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an imperfection. The former, I ſay, agrees to God; but not the latter. God knows, or hath ideas; but his ideas are not conveyed to him by ſenſe, as ours are. Your not diſtinguiſhing, where there is ſo manifeſt a difference, makes you fancy you ſee an abſurdity where there is none.

HYL. But all this while you have not conſidered that the quantity of matter hath been demonſtrated to be proportional to the gravity of bodies: and what can withſtand demonſtration?

PHIL. Let me ſee how you demonſtrate that point.

HYL. I lay it down for a principle, that the moments or quantities of motion in bodies are in a direct compounded reaſon [ratio] of the velocities and quantities of matter contained in them: hence, where the velocities are equal, it follows the moments are directly as the quantity of matter in each. But it is found, by experience, that all bodies (bating the ſmall inequalities ariſing from the reſiſtance of the air) deſcend with an equal velocity: the motion, therefore, of deſcending bodies, and conſequently their gravity, which is the cauſe or principle of that motion, is proportional to the quantity of matter: which was to be demonſtrated.

PHIL. You lay it down, as a ſelf-evident principle, that the quantity of motion in any body is proportional to the velocity and *matter* taken together; and this is made uſe of to prove a propoſition

poſition from whence the exiſtence of *matter* is inferred. Pray, is not this arguing in a circle?

Hyl. In the premiſe, I only mean, that the motion is proportional to the velocity, jointly with the extenſion and ſolidity.

Phil. But, allowing this to be true, yet it will not thence follow that gravity is proportional to *matter*, in your philoſophic ſenſe of the word, except you take it for granted that unknown *ſubſtratum*, or whatever elſe you call it, is proportional to thoſe ſenſible qualities; which, to ſuppoſe, is plainly begging the queſtion. That there is magnitude and ſolidity, or reſiſtance, perceived by ſenſe, I readily grant; as likewiſe that gravity may be proportional to thoſe qualities, I will not diſpute: but, that either theſe qualities, as perceived by us, or the powers producing them, do exiſt in a *material ſubſtratum*, this is what I deny, and you indeed affirm, but, notwithſtanding your demonſtration, have not yet proved.

Hyl. I ſhall inſiſt no longer on that point. Do you think, however, you ſhall perſuade me the natural philoſophers have been dreaming all this while: pray, what becomes of all their hypotheſes and explications of the *phænomena* which ſuppoſe the exiſtence of matter?

Phil. What mean you, Hylas, by the *phænomena*?

Hyl.

HYL. I mean the appearances which I perceive by my ſenſes.

PHIL. And the appearances perceived by ſenſe, are they not ideas?

HYL. I have told you ſo a hundred times.

PHIL. Therefore to explain the *phænomena* is to ſhew how we come to be affected with ideas, in that manner and order wherein they are imprinted on our ſenſes: is it not?

HYL. It is.

PHIL. Now, if you can prove that any philoſopher hath explained the production of any one idea in our minds by the help of *matter*, I ſhall for ever acquieſce, and look on all that hath been ſaid againſt it as nothing: but, if you cannot, it is in vain to urge the explication of *phænomena*. That a being endowed with knowledge and will ſhould produce or exhibit ideas, is eaſily underſtood: but that a being which is utterly deſtitute of theſe faculties ſhould be able to produce ideas, or in any ſort to affect an intelligence, this I can never underſtand. This, I ſay, though we had ſome poſitive conception of matter, though we knew its qualities, and could comprehend its exiſtence, would yet be ſo far from explaining things, that it is itſelf the moſt inexplicable thing in the world: and yet, for all this, it will not follow that philoſophers have been doing nothing; for, by obſerving and reaſoning upon the connexion of ideas, they diſcover the laws and methods

thods of nature; which is a part of knowledge both uſeful and entertaining.

Hyl. After all, can it be ſuppoſed God would deceive all mankind? Do you imagine he would have induced the whole world to believe the being of matter, if there were no ſuch thing?

Phil. That every epidemical opinion, ariſing from prejudice, or paſſion, or thoughtleſſneſs, may be imputed to God as the author of it, I believe you will not affirm. Whatſoever opinion we father on him, it muſt be either becauſe he has diſcovered it to us by ſupernatural revelation, or becauſe it is ſo evident to our natural faculties, which were framed and given us by God, that it is impoſſible we ſhould withhold our aſſent from it. But where is the revelation, or where is the evidence, that extorts the belief of matter? Nay, how does it appear that matter, taken for ſomething diſtinct from what we perceive by our ſenſes, is thought to exiſt by all mankind, or indeed by any except a few philoſophers, who do not know what they would be at? Your queſtion ſuppoſes theſe points are clear; and, when you have cleared them, I ſhall think myſelf obliged to give you another anſwer. In the mean time let it ſuffice that I tell you I do not ſuppoſe God has deceived mankind at all.

Hyl. But, the novelty, Philonous, the novelty! — there lies the danger. New notions ſhould always be diſcountenanced: they unſettle

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mens minds, and nobody knows where they will end.

PHIL. Why the rejecting a notion that hath no foundation, either in ſenſe, or in reaſon, or in divine authority, ſhould be thought to unſettle the belief of ſuch opinions as are grounded on all or any of theſe, I cannot imagine. That innovations in government and religion are dangerous, and ought to be diſcountenanced, I freely own: but is there the like reaſon why they ſhould be diſcouraged in philoſophy? The making any thing known which was unknown before is an innovation in knowledge; and, if all ſuch innovations had been forbidden, men would have made a notable progreſs in the arts and ſciences! But it is none of my buſineſs to plead for novelties and paradoxes. That the qualities we perceive are not on the objects: that we muſt not believe our ſenſes: that we know nothing of the real nature of things, and can never be aſſured even of their exiſtence: that real colours and ſounds are nothing but certain unknown figures and motions: that motions are in themſelves neither ſwift nor ſlow: that there are, in bodies, abſolute extenſions, without any particular magnitude or figure: that a thing, ſtupid, thoughtleſs, and inactive, operates on a ſpirit: that the leaſt particle of a body contains innumerable extended parts: — theſe are the novelties, theſe are the ſtrange notions, which ſhock the genuine uncorrupted

rupted judgement of all mankind; and, being once admitted, embarraſs the mind with endleſs doubts and difficulties: and it is againſt theſe and the like innovations I endeavour to vindicate common ſenſe. It is true, in doing this, I may perhaps be obliged to uſe ſome *ambages*, and ways of ſpeech not common: but, if my notions are once thoroughly underſtood, that which is moſt ſingular in them will in effect be found to amount to no more than this, — that it is abſolutely impoſſible, and a plain contradiction, to ſuppoſe any unthinking being ſhould exiſt without being perceived by a mind: and, if this notion be ſingular, it is a ſhame it ſhould be ſo at this time of day, and in a Chriſtian country.

Hyl. As for the difficulties other opinions may be liable to, thoſe are out of the queſtion. It is your buſineſs to defend your own opinion. Can any thing be plainer than that you are for changing all things into ideas? — you, I ſay, who are not aſhamed to charge me with *ſcepticiſm*. This is ſo plain, there is no denying it.

Phil. You miſtake me. I am not for changing things into ideas, but rather ideas into things; ſince thoſe immediate objects of perception, which, according to you, are only appearances of things, I take to be the real things themſelves.

Hyl. Things! You may pretend what you pleaſe; but it is certain you leave us nothing but the

the empty forms of things, the outſide only, which ſtrikes the ſenſes.

PHIL. What you call the empty forms and outſide of things ſeems to me the very things themſelves: nor are they empty, or incomplete, otherwiſe than upon your ſuppoſition, that matter is an eſſential part of all corporeal things. We both, therefore, agree in this, that we perceive only ſenſible forms: but herein we differ; you will have them to be empty appearances; I, real beings. In ſhort, you do not truſt your ſenſes; I do.

HYL. You ſay you believe your ſenſes, and ſeem to applaud yourſelf that in this you agree with the vulgar. According to you, therefore, the true nature of a thing is diſcovered by the ſenſes. If ſo, whence comes that diſagreement? Why is not the ſame figure, and other ſenſible qualities, perceived all manner of ways? and why ſhould we uſe a microſcope, the better to diſcover the true nature of a body, if it were diſcoverable to the naked eye?

PHIL. Strictly ſpeaking, Hylas, we do not ſee the ſame object that we feel; neither is the ſame object perceived by the microſcope which was by the naked eye. But, in caſe every variation was thought ſufficient to conſtitute a new kind or individual, the endleſs number or confuſion of names would render language impracticable. Therefore, to avoid this as well as other inconveniencies

niencies, which are obvious upon a little thought, men combine together ſeveral ideas, apprehended by divers ſenſes, or by the ſame ſenſe, at different times or in different circumſtances, but obſerved, however, to have ſome connexion in nature, either with reſpect to co-exiſtence or ſucceſſion; all which they refer to one name and conſider as one thing. Hence it follows, that, when I examine by my other ſenſes a thing I have ſeen, it is not in order to underſtand better the ſame object which I had perceived by ſight, the object of one ſenſe not being perceived by the other ſenſes: and, when I look through a microſcope, it is not that I may perceive more clearly what I perceived already with my bare eyes, the object perceived by the glaſs being quite different from the former: but, in both caſes, my aim is only to know what ideas are connected together: and, the more a man knows of the connexion of ideas, the more he is ſaid to know of the nature of things. What, therefore, if our ideas are variable? What if our ſenſes are not, in all circumſtances, affected with the ſame appearances? It will not thence follow, they are not to be truſted, or that they are inconſiſtent either with themſelves or any thing elſe, except it be with your pre-conceived notion of (I know not what) one ſingle, unchanged, unperceivable, real, nature, marked by each name. Which prejudice ſeems to have taken its riſe from not rightly underſtanding the common language

of men ſpeaking of ſeveral diſtinct ideas as united into one thing by the mind. And, indeed, there is cauſe to ſuſpect ſeveral erroneous conceits of the philoſophers are owing to the ſame original, while they began to build their ſchemes not ſo much on notions as words, which were framed by the vulgar merely for conveniency and diſpatch in the common actions of life, without any regard to ſpeculation.

Hyl. Methinks I apprehend your meaning.

Phil. It is your opinion, the ideas we perceive by our ſenſes are not real things, but images or copies of them. Our knowledge therefore is no farther real than as our ideas are the true repreſentations of thoſe originals. But, as theſe ſuppoſed originals are in themſelves unknown, it is impoſſible to know how far our ideas reſemble them, or whether they reſemble them at all. We cannot therefore be ſure we have any real knowledge. Farther, as our ideas are perpetually varied, without any change in the ſuppoſed real things, it neceſſarily follows, they cannot all be true copies of them; or, if ſome are and others are not, it is impoſſible to diſtinguiſh the former from the latter. And this plunges us yet deeper in uncertainty. Again, when we conſider the point, we cannot conceive how any idea, or any thing like an idea, ſhould have an abſolute exiſtence out of a mind; nor, conſequently, according to you, how there ſhould be any real thing in nature. The re-

ſult

ſult of all which is, that we are thrown into the moſt hopeleſs and abandoned *ſcepticiſm*. Now, give me leave to aſk you, *Firſt*, Whether your referring ideas to certain abſolutely exiſting unperceived ſubſtances, as their originals, be not the ſource of all this *ſcepticiſm? Secondly*, Whether you are informed, either by ſenſe or reaſon, of the exiſtence of thoſe unknown originals? And, in caſe you are not, Whether it be not abſurd to ſuppoſe them? *Thirdly*, Whether, upon inquiry, you find there is any thing diſtinctly conceived or meant by the *abſolute or external exiſtence of unperceiving ſubſtances? Laſtly*, Whether, the premiſes conſidered, it be not the wiſeſt way to follow nature, truſt your ſenſes, and, laying aſide all anxious thought about unknown natures or ſubſtances, admit, with the vulgar, thoſe for real things which are perceived by the ſenſes?

HYL. For the preſent, I have no inclination to the anſwering part: I would much rather ſee how you can get over what follows. Pray, are not the objects, perceived by the ſenſes of one, likewiſe perceivable to all others preſent? If there were an hundred more here, they would all ſee the garden, the trees, and flowers, as I ſee them: but they are not in the ſame manner affected with the ideas I frame in my imagination. Does not this make a difference between the former ſort of objects and the latter?

PHIL. I grant it does. Nor have I ever denied a difference between the objects of ſenſe and thoſe of imagination. But what would you infer from thence? You cannot ſay that ſenſible objects exiſt unperceived becauſe they are perceived by many.

HYL. I own I can make nothing of that objection: but it hath led me into another. Is it not your opinion, that, by our ſenſes, we perceive only the ideas exiſting in our minds?

PHIL. It is.

HYL. But the ſame idea which is in my mind cannot be in yours or in any other mind. Doth it not therefore follow, from your principles, that no two can ſee the ſame thing? And is not this highly abſurd?

PHIL. If the term, *ſame*, be taken in the vulgar acceptation, it is certain (and not at all repugnant to the principles I maintain) that different perſons may perceive the ſame thing, or the ſame thing or idea exiſt in different minds. Words are of arbitrary impoſition; and, ſince men are uſed to apply the word *ſame* where no diſtinction or variety is perceived, (and I do not pretend to alter their perceptions,) it follows, that, as men have ſaid before, *ſeveral ſaw the ſame thing*, ſo they may, upon like occaſions, ſtill continue to uſe the ſame phraſe, without any deviation either from propriety of language or the truth of things. But, if the term, *ſame*, be uſed in the acceptation of philoſophers, who

who pretend to an abſtracted notion of identity, then, according to their ſundry definitions of this notion, (for it is not yet agreed wherein that philoſophic identity conſiſts,) it may or may not be poſſible for divers perſons to perceive the ſame thing. But whether philoſophers ſhall think fit to call a thing the *ſame* or not, is, I conceive, of ſmall importance. Let us ſuppoſe ſeveral men together, all endued with the ſame faculties, and conſequently affected in like ſort by their ſenſes, and who had yet never known the uſe of language; they would, without queſtion, agree in their perceptions: though, perhaps, when they came to the uſe of ſpeech, ſome, regarding the uniformneſs of what was perceived, might call it the *ſame* thing; others, eſpecially regarding the diverſity of perſons who perceived, might chooſe the denomination of different things. But who ſees not that all the diſpute is about a word? to wit, whether what is perceived by different perſons may yet have the term *ſame* applied to it? Or, ſuppoſe a houſe, whoſe walls or outward ſhell remaining unaltered, the chambers are all pulled down, and new ones built in their place, and that you ſhould call this the *ſame*, and I ſhould ſay it was not the *ſame*, houſe; would we not, for all this, perfectly agree in our thoughts of the houſe, conſidered in itſelf? and would not all the difference conſiſt in a ſound? If you ſhould ſay, we differed in our notions; for that you ſuperadded, to your idea of the houſe,

the ſimple abſtracted idea of identity, whereas I did not; I would tell you, I know not what you mean by that *abſtracted idea of identity*; and ſhould deſire you to look into your own thoughts, and be ſure you underſtood yourſelf. — Why ſo ſilent, Hylas? Are you not yet ſatisfied, men may diſpute about identity and diverſity without any real difference in their thoughts and opinions, abſtracted from names? Take this farther reflexion with you; that, whether matter be allowed to exiſt or not, the caſe is exactly the ſame as to the point in hand. For the materialiſts themſelves acknowledge what we immediately perceive by our ſenſes to be our own ideas. Your difficulty, therefore, that no two ſee the ſame thing, makes equally againſt the materialiſts and me.

Hyl. But they ſuppoſe an external archetype, to which referring their ſeveral ideas, they may truly be ſaid to perceive the ſame thing.

Phil. And (not to mention your having diſcarded thoſe archetypes) ſo may you ſuppoſe an external archetype on my principles; *external*, I mean, to your own mind; though, indeed, it muſt be ſuppoſed to exiſt in that mind which comprehends all things: but then this ſerves all the ends of identity as well as if it exiſted out of a mind; and I am ſure you yourſelf will not ſay it is leſs intelligible.

Hyl. You have, indeed, clearly ſatisfied me, either that there is no difficulty at bottom in this point,

point, or, if there be, that it makes equally againſt both opinions.

PHIL. But that, which makes equally againſt two contradictory opinions, can be a proof againſt neither.

HYL. I acknowledge it. But, after all, Philonous, when I conſider the ſubſtance of what you advance againſt *ſcepticiſm*, it amounts to no more than this: we are ſure that we really ſee, hear, feel; in a word, that we are affected with ſenſible impreſſions.

PHIL. And how are we concerned any farther? I ſee this *cherry*, I feel it, I taſte it; and I am ſure *nothing* cannot be ſeen, or felt, or taſted: it is therefore *real*. Take away the ſenſations of ſoftneſs, moiſture, redneſs, tartneſs, and you take away the *cherry*, ſince it is not a being diſtinct from ſenſations. A *cherry*, I ſay, is nothing but a congeries of ſenſible impreſſions or ideas perceived by various ſenſes: which ideas are united into one thing (or have one name given them) by the mind, becauſe they are obſerved to attend each other. Thus, when the palate is affected with ſuch a particular taſte, the ſight is affected with a red colour, the touch with roundneſs, ſoftneſs, *&c.* Hence, when I ſee, and feel, and taſte, in ſundry certain manners, I am ſure the *cherry* exiſts, or is real; its reality being, in my opinion, nothing, abſtracted from thoſe ſenſations. But if, by the word *cherry*, you mean an unknown nature, diſtinct

from all thoſe ſenſible qualities; and, by its exiſtence, ſomething diſtinct from its being perceived; then indeed I own, neither you, nor I, nor any one elſe, can be ſure it exiſts.

HYL. But what would you ſay, Philonous, if I ſhould bring the very ſame reaſons againſt the exiſtence of ſenſible things in a mind which you have offered againſt their exiſting in a material *ſubſtratum*.

PHIL. When I ſee your reaſons, you ſhall hear what I have to ſay to them.

HYL. Is the mind extended or unextended?

PHIL. Unextended, without doubt.

HYL. Do you ſay the things you perceive are in your mind?

PHIL. They are.

HYL. Again, have I not heard you ſpeak of ſenſible impreſſions?

PHIL. I believe you may.

HYL. Explain to me now, O Philonous, how it is poſſible there ſhould be room for all thoſe trees and houſes to exiſt in your mind. Can extended things be contained in that which is unextended? Or are we to imagine impreſſions made on a thing void of all ſolidity. You cannot ſay objects are in your mind as books in your ſtudy; or that things are imprinted on it as the figure of a ſeal upon wax. In what ſenſe, therefore, are we to underſtand thoſe expreſſions? Explain me this, if you can, and I ſhall then be able to anſwer all

thoſe

thoſe queries you formerly put to me about my *ſubſtratum*.

PHIL. Look you, Hylas, when I ſpeak of objects as exiſting in the mind or imprinted on the ſenſes, I would not be underſtood in the groſs literal ſenſe, as when bodies are ſaid to exiſt in a place, or a ſeal to make an impreſſion on wax; my meaning is only that the mind comprehends or perceives them, and that it is affected from without, or by ſome being diſtinct from itſelf. This is my explication of your difficulty; and how it can ſerve to make your tenet, of an unperceiving material *ſubſtratum*, intelligible, I would fain know.

HYL. Nay, if that be all, I confeſs I do not ſee what uſe can be made of it. But are you not guilty of ſome abuſe of language in this?

PHIL. None at all: it is no more than common cuſtom, which you know is the rule of language, hath authorized; nothing being more uſual than for philoſophers to ſpeak of the immediate objects of the underſtanding as things exiſting in the mind. Nor is there any thing in this but what is conformable to the general analogy of language; moſt part of the mental operations being ſignified by words borrowed from ſenſible things; as is plain in the words *comprehend*, *reflect*, *diſcourſe*, *&c.* which, being applied to the mind, muſt not be taken in their groſs original ſenſe.

HYL.

HYL. You have, I own, ſatisfied me in this point: but there ſtill remains one great difficulty, which I know not how you will get over: and, indeed, it is of ſuch importance, that, if you could ſolve all others, without being able to find a ſolution for this, you muſt never expect to make me a proſelyte to your principles.

PHIL. Let me know this mighty difficulty.

HYL. The Scripture account of the creation is what appears to me utterly irreconcileable with your notions. Moſes tells us of a creation: a creation of what? of ideas? No, certainly; but of things; of real things; ſolid corporeal ſubſtances. Bring your principles to agree with this, and I ſhall perhaps agree with you.

PHIL. Moſes mentions the ſun, moon, and ſtars, earth and ſea, plants and animals: that all theſe do really exiſt, and were in the beginning created by God, I make no queſtion. If, by *ideas*, you mean fictions and fancies of the mind, then theſe are no ideas. If, by *ideas*, you mean immediate objects of the underſtanding, or ſenſible things which cannot exiſt unperceived, or out of a mind, then theſe things are ideas. But, whether you do or do not call them *ideas*, it matters little: the difference is only about a name: and, whether that name be retained or rejected, the ſenſe, the truth, and reality, of things continues the ſame. In common talk, the objects of our ſenſes are not termed *ideas*, but *things*. Call them

ſo

ſo ſtill; provided you do not attribute to them any abſolute external exiſtence, and I ſhall never quarrel with you for a word. The creation, therefore, I allow to have been a creation of things, of *real* things. Neither is this in the leaſt inconſiſtent with my principles, as is evident from what I have now ſaid, and would have been evident to you without this, if you had not forgotten what has been ſo often ſaid before. But, as for ſolid corporeal ſubſtances, I deſire you to ſhew where Moſes makes any mention of them: and, if they ſhould be mentioned by him, or any other inſpired writer, it would ſtill be incumbent on you to ſhew thoſe words were not taken in the vulgar acceptation, for things falling under our ſenſes, but in the philoſophic acceptation, for matter, or an unknown quiddity, with an abſolute exiſtence. When you have proved theſe points, then (and not till then) may you bring the authority of Moſes into our diſpute.

Hyl. It is in vain to diſpute about a point ſo clear. I am content to refer it to your own conſcience. Are you not ſatisfied there is ſome peculiar repugnancy between the Moſaic account of the creation and your notions?

Phil. If all poſſible ſenſe, which can be put on the firſt chapter of Geneſis, may be conceived as conſiſtently with my principles as any other, then it has no peculiar repugnancy with them. But there is no ſenſe you may not as well conceive, believing

lieving as I do; ſince, beſide ſpirits, all you conceive are ideas, and the exiſtence of theſe I do not deny. Neither do you pretend they exiſt without the mind.

HYL. Pray let me ſee any ſenſe you can underſtand it in.

PHIL. Why, I imagine, that, if I had been preſent at the creation, I ſhould have ſeen things produced into being, that is, become perceptible, in the order deſcribed by the ſacred hiſtorian. I ever before believed the Moſaic account of the creation, and now find no alteration in my manner of believing it. When things are ſaid to begin or end their exiſtence, we do not mean this with regard to God, but his creatures. All objects are eternally known by God, or, which is the ſame thing, have an eternal exiſtence in his mind: but, when things, before imperceptible to creatures, are, by a decree of God, made perceptible to them, then are they ſaid to begin a relative exiſtence, with reſpect to created minds. Upon reading, therefore, the Moſaic account of the creation, I underſtand that the ſeveral parts of the world became gradually perceivable to finite ſpirits, endowed with proper faculties; ſo that, whoever ſuch were preſent, they were in truth perceived by them. This is the literal obvious ſenſe ſuggeſted to me by the words of the holy Scripture: in which is included no mention or no thought either of *ſubſtratum*, inſtrument, occaſion,

or

or abſolute exiſtence. And, upon enquiry, I doubt not, it will be found, that moſt plain honeſt men, who believe the creation, never think of thoſe things any more than I: what metaphyſical ſenſe you may underſtand it in you only can tell.

HYL. But, Philonous, you do not ſeem to be aware that you allow created things, in the beginning, only a relative, and conſequently a hypothetical, being: that is to ſay, upon ſuppoſition there were men to perceive them; without which they have no actuality of abſolute exiſtence wherein creation might terminate. Is it not, therefore, according to you, plainly impoſſible, the creation of any inanimate creatures ſhould precede that of man? And is not this directly contrary to the Moſaic account?

PHIL. In anſwer to that, I ſay, *firſt*, created beings might begin to exiſt in the mind of other created intelligences, beſide men. You will not therefore be able to prove any contradiction between Moſes and my notions, unleſs you firſt ſhew there was no other order of finite created ſpirits in being before man. I ſay farther, in caſe we conceive the creation, as we ſhould at this time a parcel of plants or vegetables of all ſorts, produced by an inviſible power in a deſart where nobody was preſent, that this way of explaining or conceiving it is conſiſtent with my principles, ſince they deprive you of nothing, either ſenſible or imaginable:

imaginable: that it exactly ſuits with the common, natural, undebauched, notions of mankind: That it manifeſts the dependence of all things on God; and conſequently hath all the good effect or influence which it is poſſible that important article of our faith ſhould have in making men humble, thankful, and reſigned to their Creator. I ſay, moreover, that, in this naked conception of things, diveſted of words, there will not be found any notion of what you call the *actuality of abſolute exiſtence.* You may indeed raiſe a duſt with thoſe terms, and ſo lengthen our diſpute to no purpoſe: But I intreat you calmly to look into your own thoughts, and then tell me if they are not an uſeleſs and unintelligible jargon.

HYL. I own I have no very clear notion annexed to them. But what ſay you to this? Do you not make the exiſtence of ſenſible things conſiſt in their being in a mind? And were not all things eternally in the mind of God? Did they not therefore exiſt from all eternity, according to you? And how could that which was eternal be created in time? Can any thing be clearer or better connected than this?

PHIL. And are not you too of opinion that God knew all things from eternity?

HYL. I am.

PHIL. Conſequently they always had a being in the divine Intellect.

HYL. This I acknowledge.

PHIL.

PHIL. By your own confeſſion, therefore, nothing is new, or begins to be, in reſpect of the mind of God. So we are agreed in that point.

HYL. What ſhall we make then of the creation?

PHIL. May we not underſtand it to have been intirely in reſpect of finite ſpirits; ſo that things, with regard to us, may properly be ſaid to begin their exiſtence, or be created, when God decreed they ſhould become perceptible to intelligent creatures in that order and manner which he then eſtabliſhed, and which we now call the laws of nature? You may call this a *relative* or *hypothetical exiſtence*, if you pleaſe: but, ſo long as it ſupplies us with the moſt natural, obvious, and literal, ſenſe of the Moſaic hiſtory of the creation; ſo long as it anſwers all the religious ends of that great article; in a word, ſo long as you can aſſign no other ſenſe or meaning in its ſtead; why ſhould we reject this? Is it to comply with a ridiculous ſceptical humour of making every thing nonſenſe and unintelligible? I am ſure you cannot ſay it is for the glory of God. For, allowing it to be a thing poſſible and conceivable, that the corporeal world ſhould have an abſolute ſubſiſtence, extrinſecal to the mind of God as well as to the minds of all created ſpirits, yet how could this ſet forth either the immenſity or omniſcience of the Deity, or the neceſſary and immediate dependence of all things on him? Nay, would it not rather ſeem to derogate from thoſe attributes?

HYL.

HYL. Well, but, as to this decree of God's, for making things perceptible, what ſay you, Philonous, is it not plain, God did either execute that decree from all eternity, or at ſome certain time began to will what he had not actually willed before, but only deſigned to will? If the former, then there could be no creation or beginning of exiſtence in finite things. If the latter, then we muſt acknowledge ſomething new to befal the Deity; which implies a ſort of change; and all change argues imperfection.

PHIL. Pray conſider what you are doing. Is it not evident, this objection concludes equally againſt a creation in any ſenſe? nay, againſt every other act of the Deity diſcoverable by the light of nature? None of which can we conceive otherwiſe than as performed in time, and having a beginning. God is a being of tranſcendent and unlimited perfections: his nature therefore is incomprehenſible to finite ſpirits. It is not therefore to be expected that any man, whether *materialiſt* or *immaterialiſt*, ſhould have exactly juſt notions of the Deity, his attributes, and ways of operation. If then you would infer any thing againſt me, your difficulty muſt not be drawn from the inadequateneſs of our conceptions of the divine nature, which is unavoidable on any ſcheme, but from the denial of matter, of which there is not one word, directly or indirectly, in what you have now objected.

HYL.

HYL. I muſt acknowledge, the difficulties you are concerned to clear are ſuch only as ariſe from the non-exiſtence of matter and are peculiar to that notion. So far you are in the right. But I cannot, by any means, bring myſelf to think there is no ſuch peculiar repugnancy between the creation and your opinion; though, indeed, where to fix it I do not diſtinctly know.

PHIL. What would you have! Do I not acknowledge a twofold ſtate of things, the one ectypal, or natural, the other archetypal and eternal? The former was created in time; the latter exiſted from everlaſting in the mind of God. Is not this agreeable to the common notions of divines? or is any more than this neceſſary in order to conceive the creation? But you ſuſpect ſome peculiar repugnancy, though you know not where it lies. To take away all poſſibility of ſcruple in this caſe, do but conſider this one point: either you are not able to conceive the creation on any hypotheſis whatſoever, (and, if ſo, there is no ground for diſlike or complaint againſt any particular opinion on that ſcore,) or you are able to conceive it; and, if ſo, why not on my principles, ſince thereby nothing conceivable is taken away? You have all along been allowed the full ſcope of ſenſe, imagination, and reaſon: whatever, therefore, you could before apprehend, either immediately or mediately, by your ſenſes, or by ratiocination from your ſenſes, whatever you could perceive, imagine, or underſtand, remains ſtill with you. If therefore the notion you have of the creation, by

other principles, be intelligible, you have it ſtill upon mine; if it be not intelligible, I conceive it to be no notion at all, and ſo there is no loſs of it. And, indeed, it ſeems to me very plain, that the ſuppoſition of matter, that is, a thing perfectly unknown and inconceivable, cannot ſerve to make us conceive any thing. And I hope it need not be proved to you, that, if the exiſtence of matter doth not make the creation conceivable, the creation's being without it inconceivable can be no objection againſt its non-exiſtence.

Hyl. I confeſs, Philonous, you have almoſt ſatisfied me in this point of the creation.

Phil. I would fain know why you are not quite ſatisfied. You tell me, indeed, of a repugnancy between the Moſaic hiſtory and immaterialiſm; but you know not where it lies. Is this reaſonable, Hylas? Can you expect I ſhould ſolve a difficulty without knowing what it is? But, to paſs by all that, would not a man think you were aſſured there is no repugnancy between the received notions of materialiſts and the inſpired writings?

Hyl. And ſo I am.

Phil. Ought the hiſtorical part of Scripture to be underſtood in a plain obvious ſenſe, or in a ſenſe which is metaphyſical and out of the way?

Hyl. In the plain ſenſe, doubtleſs.

Phil. When Moſes ſpeaks of herbs, earth, water, *&c.* as having been created by God, think you not the ſenſible things, commonly ſignified by

thoſe

thoſe words, are ſuggeſted to every unphiloſophical reader?

HYL. I cannot help thinking ſo.

PHIL. And are not all ideas, or things perceived by ſenſe, to be denied a real exiſtence by the doctrine of the materialiſts?

HYL. This I have already acknowledged.

PHIL. The creation, therefore, according to them, was not the creation of things ſenſible, which have only a relative being, but of certain unknown natures, which have an abſolute being, wherein creation might terminate.

HYL. True.

PHIL. Is it not, therefore, evident, the aſſertors of matter deſtroy the plain obvious ſenſe of Moſes, (with which their notions are utterly inconſiſtent,) and, inſtead of it, obtrude on us I know not what, ſomething equally unintelligible to themſelves and me?

HYL. I cannot contradict you.

PHIL. Moſes tells us of a creation: a creation of what? of unknown quiddities, of occaſions, or *ſubſtratums?* No, certainly; but of things obvious to the ſenſes. You muſt firſt reconcile this with your notions, if you expect I ſhould be reconciled to them.

HYL. I ſee you can aſſault me with my own weapons.

PHIL. Then, as to *abſolute exiſtence*, was there ever known a more jejune notion than that? Something it is, ſo abſtracted and unintelligible, that you have frankly owned you could not conceive it,

much leſs explain any thing by it. But, allowing matter to exiſt, and the notion of abſolute exiſtence to be as clear as light, yet, was this ever known to make the creation more credible? Nay, hath it not furniſhed the *atheiſts* and *infidels* of all ages with the moſt plauſible argument againſt a creation? That a corporeal ſubſtance, which hath an abſolute exiſtence without the minds of ſpirits, ſhould be produced out of nothing, by the mere will of a ſpirit, hath been looked upon as a thing ſo contrary to all reaſon, ſo impoſſible and abſurd, that not only the moſt celebrated among the ancients, but even divers modern and Chriſtian philoſophers, have thought matter co-eternal with the Deity. Lay theſe things together, and then judge you whether materialiſm diſpoſes men to believe the creation of things.

Hyl. I own, Philonous, I think it does not. This of the *creation* is the laſt objection I can think of; and I muſt needs own it hath been ſufficiently anſwered as well as the reſt. Nothing now remains to be overcome but a ſort of unaccountable backwardneſs that I find in myſelf toward your notions.

Phil. When a man is ſwayed, he knows not why, to one ſide of a queſtion, can this, think you, be any thing elſe but the effect of prejudice, which never fails to attend old and rooted notions? And, indeed, in this reſpect, I cannot deny the belief of matter to have very much the advantage over the contrary opinion, with men of a learned education.

Hyl.

HYL. I confeſs it ſeems to be as you ſay.

PHIL. As a balance, therefore, to this weight of prejudice, let us throw into the ſcale the great advantages that ariſe from the belief of immaterialiſm, both in regard to religion and human learning. The being of a God and the incorruptibility of the ſoul, thoſe great articles of religion, are they not proved with the cleareſt and moſt immediate evidence? When I ſay the being of a *God*, I do not mean an obſcure general cauſe of things, whereof we have no conception, but *God*, in the ſtrict and proper ſenſe of the word: a being whoſe ſpirituality, omnipreſence, providence, omniſcience, infinite power and goodneſs, are as conſpicuous as the exiſtence of ſenſible things, of which (notwithſtanding the fallacious pretences and affected ſcruples of ſceptics) there is no more reaſon to doubt than of our own being. Then, with relation to human ſciences: in natural philoſophy, what intricacies, what obſcurities, what contradictions, hath the belief of matter led men into! To ſay nothing of the numberleſs diſputes about its extent, continuity, homogeneity, gravity, diviſibility, *&c.* do they not pretend to explain all things by bodies operating on bodies according to the laws of motion? and yet are they able to comprehend how any one body ſhould move another? Nay, admitting there was no difficulty in reconciling the notion of an inert being with a cauſe, or in conceiving how an accident might paſs from one body to another, yet, by all their ſtrained thoughts and extravagant ſuppoſitions, have they

been able to reach the mechanical production of any one animal or vegetable body? Can they account, by the laws of motion, for ſounds, taſtes, ſmells, or colours, or for the regular courſe of things? Have they accounted, by phyſical principles, for the aptitude and contrivance even of the moſt inconſiderable parts of the univerſe? But, laying aſide matter and corporeal cauſes, and admitting only the efficiency of an all-perfect mind, are not all the effects of nature eaſy and intelligible? If the *phænomena* are nothing elſe but *ideas*, God is a *ſpirit*, but matter an unintelligent unperceiving being. If they demonſtrate an unlimited power in their cauſe, God is active and omnipotent, but matter an inert maſs. If the order, regularity, and uſefulneſs, of them, can never be ſufficiently admired, God is infinitely wiſe and provident, but matter deſtitute of all contrivance and deſign. Theſe ſurely are great advantages in *phyſics:* not to mention that the apprehenſion of a diſtant deity naturally diſpoſes men to a negligence in their *moral* actions, which they would be more cautious of in caſe they thought him immediately preſent, and acting on their minds without the interpoſition of matter or unthinking ſecond cauſes. Then, in *metaphyſics*, what difficulties concerning entity in abſtract, ſubſtantial forms, hylarchic principles, plaſtic natures, ſubſtance and accident, principle of individuation, poſſibility of matter's thinking, origin of ideas, the manner how two independent ſubſtances, ſo widely different as *ſpirit* and *matter*, ſhould mutually operate on each other;—what difficulties,

culties, I ſay, and endleſs diſquiſitions, concerning theſe and innumerable other the like points, do we eſcape, by ſuppoſing only ſpirits and ideas? Even the *mathematics* themſelves, if we take away the abſolute exiſtence of extended things, become much more clear and eaſy; the moſt ſhocking paradoxes and intricate ſpeculations in thoſe ſciences depending on the infinite diviſibility of finite extenſion, which depends on that ſuppoſition. But what need is there to inſiſt on the particular ſciences? Is not that oppoſition to all ſcience whatſoever, that phrenſy of the ancient and modern *ſceptics*, built on the ſame foundation? Or can you produce ſo much as one argument againſt the reality of corporeal things, or in behalf of that avowed utter ignorance of their natures, which doth not ſuppoſe their reality to conſiſt in an external abſolute exiſtence? Upon this ſuppoſition, indeed, the objections, from the change of colours in a pigeon's neck, or the appearance of a broken oar in the water, muſt be allowed to have weight. But thoſe and the like objections vaniſh, if we do not maintain the being of abſolute external originals, but place the reality of things in ideas, fleeting indeed and changeable, however not changed at random, but according to the fixed order of nature. For herein conſiſts that conſtancy and truth of things which ſecures all the concerns of life, and diſtinguiſhes that which is *real* from the irregular viſions of the fancy.

Hyl. I agree to all you have now ſaid, and muſt own, that nothing can incline me to embrace

your opinion more than the advantages I ſee it is attended with. I am by nature lazy; and this would be a mighty abridgement in knowledge. What doubts, what hypotheſes, what labyrinths of amuſement, what fields of diſputation, what an ocean of falſe learning, may be avoided, by that ſingle notion of *immaterialiſm!*

PHIL. After all, is there any thing farther remaining to be done? You may remember, you promiſed to embrace that opinion which, upon examination, ſhould appear moſt agreeable to common-ſenſe and remote from *ſcepticiſm.* This, by your own confeſſion, is that which denies matter or the abſolute exiſtence of corporeal things. Nor is this all: the ſame notion has been proved ſeveral ways, viewed in different lights, purſued in its conſequences, and all objections againſt it cleared. Can there be a greater evidence of its truth? or is it poſſible it ſhould have all the marks of a true opinion and yet be falſe?

HYL. I own myſelf intirely ſatisfied, for the preſent, in all reſpects. But what ſecurity can I have that I ſhall ſtill continue the ſame full aſſent to your opinion, and that no unthought-of objection or difficulty will occur hereafter.

PHIL. Pray, Hylas, do you, in other caſes, when a point is once evidently proved, with-hold your aſſent on account of objections or difficulties it may be liable to? Are the difficulties that attend the doctrine of incommenſurable quantities, of the angle of contact, of the aſymptotes to curves, or the like, ſufficient to make you hold out againſt mathematical

mathematical demonſtration? Or will you diſbelieve the providence of God, becauſe there may be ſome particular things which you know not how to reconcile with it? If there are difficulties attending immaterialiſm, there are at the ſame time direct and evident proofs for it. But for the exiſtence of matter there is not one proof, and far more numerous and inſurmountable objections lie againſt it. But where are thoſe mighty difficulties you inſiſt on? Alas, you know not where or what they are! ſomething which may poſſibly occur hereafter. If this be a ſufficient pretence for with-holding your full aſſent, you ſhould never yield it to any propoſition, how free ſoever from exceptions, how clearly and ſolidly ſoever demonſtrated.

HYL. You have ſatisfied me, Philonous.

PHIL. But, to arm you againſt all future objections, do but conſider, that which bears equally hard on two contradictory opinions can be a proof againſt neither. Whenever, therefore, any difficulty occurs, try if you can find a ſolution for it on the hypotheſis of the *materialiſts*. Be not deceived by words, but ſound your own thoughts. And, in caſe you cannot conceive it eaſier by the help of *materialiſm*, it is plain it can be no objection againſt *immaterialiſm*. Had you proceeded all along by this rule, you would probably have ſpared yourſelf abundance of trouble in objecting; ſince, of all your difficulties, I challenge you to ſhew one that is explained by matter; nay, which is not more unintelligible with than without that ſuppoſition,

ſuppoſition, and conſequently makes more *againſt* than *for* it. You ſhould conſider, in each particular, whether the difficulty ariſes from the *non-exiſtence of matter*. If it doth not, you might as well argue, from the infinite diviſibility of extenſion, againſt the divine preſcience, as, from ſuch a difficulty, againſt *immaterialiſm*. And yet, upon recollection, I believe you will find this to have been often, if not always, the caſe. You ſhould likewiſe take heed not to argue on a *petitio principii*. One is apt to ſay, the unknown ſubſtances ought to be eſteemed real things, rather than the ideas in our minds: and who can tell but the unthinking external ſubſtance may concur, as a cauſe, or inſtrument, in the production of our ideas? But is not this proceeding on a ſuppoſition that there are ſuch external ſubſtances? And, to ſuppoſe this, is it not begging the queſtion? But, above all things, you ſhould beware of impoſing on yourſelf by that vulgar ſophiſm which is called *ignoratio elenchi*. You talked often as if you thought I maintained the non-exiſtence of ſenſible things; whereas, in truth, no one can be more thoroughly aſſured of their exiſtence than I am; and it is you who doubt, I ſhould have ſaid poſitively deny, it. Every thing that is ſeen, felt, heard, or any way perceived by the ſenſes, is, on the principles I embrace, a real being, but not on yours. Remember, the matter you contend for is an unknown ſomewhat, (if indeed it may be termed *ſomewhat*,) which is quite ſtripped of all ſenſible qualities, and can neither be perceived by ſenſe nor apprehended by

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the mind. Remember, I ſay, that it is not any object which is hard or ſoft, hot or cold, blue or white, round or ſquare, *&c.* For all theſe things I affirm do exiſt: though, indeed, I deny they have an exiſtence diſtinct from being perceived, or that they exiſt out of all minds whatſoever. Think on theſe points; let them be attentively conſidered and ſtill kept in view: otherwiſe you will not comprehend the ſtate of the queſtion; without which, your objections will always be wide of the mark, and, inſtead of mine, may poſſibly be directed (as more than once they have been) againſt your own notions.

HYL. I muſt needs own, Philonous, nothing ſeems to have kept me from agreeing with you more than this ſame *miſtaking the queſtion.* In denying matter, at firſt glimpſe, I am tempted to imagine you deny the things we ſee and feel; but, upon reflexion, I find there is no ground for it. What think you, therefore, of retaining the name, *matter*, and applying it to ſenſible things? This may be done without any change in your ſentiments: and, believe me, it would be a means of reconciling them to ſome perſons, who may be more ſhocked at an innovation in words than in opinion.

PHIL. With all my heart. Retain the word, *matter*, and apply it to the objects of ſenſe, if you pleaſe, provided you do not attribute to them any ſubſiſtence diſtinct from their being perceived. I ſhall never quarrel with you for an expreſſion. *Matter*, or *material ſubſtance*, are terms introduced by

by philoſophers, and, as uſed by them, imply a ſort of independency, or a ſubſiſtence diſtinct from being perceived by a mind; but are never uſed by common people; or, if ever, it is to ſignify the immediate objects of ſenſe. One would think, therefore, ſo long as the names of all particular things, with the terms *ſenſible*, *ſubſtance*, *body*, *ſtuff*, and the like, are retained, the word *matter* ſhould be never miſſed in common talk; and in philoſophical diſcourſes it ſeems the beſt way to leave it quite out, ſince there is not, perhaps, any one thing that hath more favoured and ſtrengthened the depraved bent of the mind toward *atheiſm* than the uſe of that general confuſed term.

HYL. Well; but, Philonous, ſince I am content to give up the notion of an unthinking ſubſtance exterior to the mind, I think you ought not to deny me the privilege of uſing the word *matter* as I pleaſe, and annexing it to a collection of ſenſible qualities ſubſiſting only in the mind. I freely own, there is no other ſubſtance, in a ſtrict ſenſe, than *ſpirit*: but I have been ſo long accuſtomed to the term, *matter*, that I know not how to part with it. To ſay, there is no *matter* in the world, is ſtill ſhocking to me. Whereas, to ſay, there is no *matter*, if, by that term, be meant an unthinking ſubſtance exiſting without the mind; but if, by *matter*, be meant ſome ſenſible thing whoſe exiſtence conſiſts in being perceived, then there is *matter*. This diſtinction gives it quite another turn; and men will come into your notions with ſmall difficulty when they are propoſed in that manner.

manner. For, after all, the controverſy about *matter*, in the ſtrict acceptation of it, lies altogether between you and the philoſophers, whoſe principles, I acknowledge, are not near ſo natural, or ſo agreeable to the common ſenſe of mankind, and holy Scripture, as yours. There is nothing we either deſire or ſhun but as it makes, or is apprehended to make, ſome part of our happineſs or miſery. But what hath happineſs or miſery, joy or grief, pleaſure or pain, to do with abſolute exiſtence, or with unknown entities, abſtracted from all relation to us? It is evident, things regard us only as they are pleaſing or diſpleaſing: and they can pleaſe or diſpleaſe only ſo far forth as they are perceived: farther, therefore, we are not concerned; and thus far you leave things as you found them. Yet ſtill there is ſomething new in this doctrine. It is plain, I do not now think with the philoſophers nor yet altogether with the vulgar. I would know how the caſe ſtands in this reſpect; preciſely, what you have added to, or altered in, my former notions.

PHIL. I do not pretend to be a ſetter-up of *new notions*. My endeavours tend only to unite, and place in a clearer light, that truth which was before ſhared between the vulgar and the philoſophers: the former being of opinion, that *thoſe things they immediately perceive are the real things*; and the latter, that *the things immediately perceived are ideas which exiſt only in the mind.* Which two notions put together do, in effect, conſtitute the ſubſtance of what I advance.

HYL.

HYL. I have been a long time diſtruſting my ſenſes; methought I ſaw things by a dim light and through falſe glaſſes: now the glaſſes are removed, and a new light breaks in upon my underſtanding. I am clearly convinced that I ſee things in their native forms, and am no longer in pain about their unknown natures or abſolute exiſtence. This is the ſtate I find myſelf in at preſent: though, indeed, the courſe that brought me to it I do not yet thoroughly comprehend. You ſet out upon the ſame principles that *Academics*, *Carteſians*, and the like ſects, uſually do; and, for a long time, it looked as if you were advancing their philoſophical *ſcepticiſm*; but, in the end, your concluſions are directly oppoſite to theirs.

PHIL. You ſee, Hylas, the water of yonder fountain, how it is forced upwards, in a round column, to a certain height, at which it breaks, and falls back into the baſon from whence it roſe; its aſcent as well as deſcent proceeding from the ſame uniform law or principle of *gravitation*. Juſt ſo, the ſame principles which, at firſt view, lead to *ſcepticiſm*, purſued to a certain point, bring men back to common-ſenſe.

THE END.

ERRATUM. Page 19, l. 22, for, drum of the *air*, read, drum of the *ear*.

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